

Overview of Seats Filled and Time Slot Utilization

An analysis was performed to determine the percentage of seats filled in each department/program. The number of students enrolled in each course was divided by the number of seats listed as available for that course. This calculation was carried out for each course in each department and program for the semesters from Fall 2002 through May Term 2007. Courses with enrollment caps that do not reflect actual enrollment (like music ensembles, independent study experiences, off-campus study experiences, ROTC courses, and courses which do not appear to have enrolled enough students to be delivered) were deleted from the calculations. Also analyzed were percentages of seats used separated by course level. These analyses also do not reflect the considerable amount of faculty time devoted to independent study, research mentoring, and other non-course demands on faculty resources.

Based on this data, the departments/programs experiencing the greatest enrollment pressures are Health, Women's Studies, Spanish, Business, Psychology, English, Philosophy and History. Each of these departments/programs have average enrollments greater than 90% of seat capacity. Overall, IWU enrollments are at 79% of capacity. This analysis, however, should not be used as the sole determinant of enrollment pressures. The analysis does not rank the actual number of students enrolled in the classes, but rather views pressure as a percentage of seats being used. Also, the analysis does not address the question of disparities in caps between departments (i.e., the difference between a class with a cap of 30 that enrolls 15 students and a class with a cap of 15 that also enrolls 15 students). The latter scenario would lead to a higher rank in this analysis than the former scenario.

The 79% of capacity figure, however, may be misleading, perhaps underestimating the enrollment pressures faced at IWU, especially in 100 level courses. 100 level courses are at approximately 90% capacity. 200 level Fall and Spring courses average 82-84% capacity. 400 level courses, which run at approximately 74% capacity, lower the overall enrollment percentage. May Terms (which are not included in the above figures) are highly popular among our students, running at approximately 87% capacity. 100 level May Term courses are especially popular, running at 95% capacity. This may be due to a relative lack of 100 level May Term courses. There are on average twelve 100 level courses during May Term, as compared to an average of twenty-six 200 level and thirty-one 300 level courses each May Term.

Lastly, an analysis of courses offered during different times of the day revealed some consistent findings. The time periods that are least utilized at IWU are for 8am classes and MWF 3pm classes. Otherwise, classes are relatively well-distributed among all other time periods. One potential area for concern is a change in the distribution of MWF classes and TTH classes. There is a trend towards an increase in the total number of TTH classes and a decrease in MWF classes. Given that there are more potential time slots between 8am and 4pm for MWF classes (9 slots) than TTH classes (5 slots), one might perhaps expect a greater separation between the numbers of MWF and TTH classes offered.

An overview of Academic Areas offered at IWU compared to those offered at “peer” institutions.

General information:

- The following list of schools, suggested by Michael Thompson, was used in this comparison: Augustana, Denison, Franklin & Marshall, Gettysburg, Kenyon, Knox, Lawrence, Macalester, Oberlin, Rhodes, St. Lawrence, St. Olaf, Wofford, Wooster.
- This information was collated from lists posted at the Academics web page for each school. In some cases additional searching was required in order to produce an “apples to apples” comparison of available information. Undoubtedly there are programs at some schools that did not appear through a search of this type.
- Information about some of IWU’s programs (notably some languages and specializations within International Studies) is less accessible than at web sites for other schools, where these areas are listed on the main page along with the other academic areas. This may indicate that information requiring additional “linking” on the IWU page should be moved to the main page in order to present the information with the same ease encountered at other web sites. (IWU and Rhodes were the only two schools requiring much additional searching.)
- No data were collected regarding enrollment or student interest in any of the listed areas. So, some of these programs may be full of classes and devoid of students.

Observations I: Academic Areas listed at IWU that are rare, based on information presented at the Academic web page for each school.

- IWU is one of three schools that list Accounting as an academic area/program.
- IWU is one of three schools that list Humanities as an academic area/program.
- IWU is the only school to list a major specifically in Insurance.
- IWU is the only school that lists Music Theatre as an academic area. Several schools offer a dance emphasis within the Theatre degree, but no one else lists a program incorporating all the areas required for a degree in Music Theatre.
- Of the five schools that list Nursing, only two list it as a major. Of the others, one is a dual degree, one is a cooperative degree and one is a pre-professional program.
- IWU is the only school that lists a specific program in Arts Management.

Observations II: Academic areas IWU does not offer that most other schools do:

- Biochemistry is offered at more than two-thirds of the schools.
- Two-thirds of the schools offer programs in Gender Studies, separate from or in addition to Women’s Studies.
- Two-thirds of the schools offer programs in Neuroscience.

Observations III: Academic areas IWU does not offer that many other schools do:

- A program in Astronomy is offered at between one-third and one-half of the schools.

- Programs in Chinese and/or China Studies are offered at about two-thirds of the schools. (Again, based on the information at our Academics web page.)
- Programs in Cinema/Film Studies are offered at more than half of the schools.
- Almost half of the schools offer some sort of Health Science/Physical Education/Sports Studies program.

Observations IV: Miscellaneous

- Nearly two-thirds of the schools offer American Studies.
- Three schools offer Arabic.
- Four schools offer Middle Eastern/Islamic Studies. Interestingly, only one of these is a school that also offers Arabic.
- About one-fourth of the schools offer Archeology.
- Two-thirds of the schools offer degrees in “Classics.”
- Half of the schools offer a program in Engineering, almost all of which are listed as cooperative programs.
- Only two schools offer programs in Geography, while almost half offer programs in Geology.
- One-third of the schools list Italian as an academic area.
- Two-thirds of the schools offer Japanese/Japan Studies.
- Four schools list Journalism as an academic area.
- Three schools list Judaic Studies as an academic area.
- Two-thirds of the schools specify that they offer a Pre-Law program as an academic area.
- Three schools offer programs in Linguistics.
- Four schools offer programs in Literature/Comparative Literature.
- About half of the schools list Pre-Medicine as an academic area.
- Two schools offer programs in Medieval/Renaissance Studies.
- There are three programs in Molecular Biology.
- Only one school offers a program in Music Therapy.
- Three schools offer degrees in Social Service/Social Work areas.
- Three schools list Urban Studies as an academic area.
- Six schools list Writing/Creative Writing as an academic area.

Strategic Curricular Review: Guiding Principles and Process

- Principle 1: The curriculum “fosters creativity, critical thinking, effective communication, strength of character and a spirit of inquiry; it deepens the specialized knowledge of a discipline with a comprehensive world view.” (IWU Mission Statement)
- Principle 2: The curriculum will align with the relevant elements of the university’s Vision and Strategic Plan.
- Principle 3: The resources needed in order to deliver the curriculum will be adequate (*human resources: faculty, administration, staff; technological resources; library; facilities*).
- Principle 4: This and all subsequent review processes will be open, fair, documented, and transparent.

The Curricular Review Process:

Phase I : Gathering Information

- Historical Information: *When was the last review conducted? What were the findings? What were the strategic curricular recommendations and were they implemented? Was there any assessment plan attached to the strategic curricular innovations/adjustments?*
- *Sources include institutional research, CARP/CUPP reports, North Central Accreditation, professional programs accreditations, for example: Nursing, Music, Chemistry, and Education.*
- Research: *1) What are the best practices for strategic curricular reviews and strategic curricular innovations? 2) Identify our peers, investigate their curriculum and identify areas of interest.*
- Data Collection: *for the purpose of determining the status of the curriculum and its alignment with the Strategic Plan. Data collected not only from departments, schools and interdisciplinary programs but also from university-wide programs: General Education, Study Abroad, and May Term, and from institutional research.*

Phase II: Analyzing the data, soliciting ideas, and facilitating focused discussions on the curriculum

- Analysis of Data: *Analyze the data collected in Phase I and prepare a report on the findings. Present the report to the faculty.*

- Ideas/Vision: *Call for collaborative and/or individual proposals from divisions, departments, faculty, and students on improving the current curriculum content, structure or both, and on innovations. Organize open forums with faculty and students and meetings with members of the administration.*
- Identify common themes and areas of curricular concern: *Recognize areas that are already aligned with the Strategic Plan and work well. Identify (1) areas that need revision/renewal/restructuring and/or additional resources to better align themselves with the Strategic Plan and (2) curricular innovations that are needed to keep pace with developments in the nation and the world, as called for by the Strategic Plan.*
- Generate working report on curricular recommendations. *Post working report on the website and create opportunities for discussions: intra- and inter-division meetings, retreats, faculty question at faculty meetings, and meetings with major committees.*

Phase III: Writing the report/proposal and soliciting feedback

- Articulate specific curricular proposal(s) based on information gathered in Phase II;
- Invite feedback through same mechanism as in Phase II;
- Articulate a process for (a) future long-term strategic curricular planning and for (b) ongoing development and growth of the curriculum;
- Invite feedback as done above;
- Deliver final report to Provost by end of Spring 2008.

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