To: Chung-Hsien Sung, Chair, Department of Mathematical Sciences

From: CLAS Curriculum Committee,  
Missy Thibodeaux-Thompson, Chair

Re: Mathematical Sciences Department Program Review

Date: May 27, 2010

Thank you for preparing the required program review for the Mathematical Sciences Department. The curriculum committee (CC) has reviewed and discussed the program review, and the chair of the curriculum committee, along with the Associate Dean, met with members of the Math department regarding some revisions. Our commendations and recommendations are as follows.

The program's curricular objectives are cohesive and appropriate for preparing students for the evolving needs of our ever-changing society. The entrance requirements are in keeping with the standards of similar programs.

The program's entrance assessment criteria involve specific, measurable skill requirements of students, and the exit assessment is based on grades in four core courses. The program has implemented various curricular changes based on the assessment results, and the CC encourages continued tracking of the assessment results with regard to curricular needs. In addition, the program addressed a correlation between entrance assessment test results with retention, acknowledging that a significant number of students enter the program underprepared, often leaving the major early on.

Within the review period, the program has adjusted course offerings based on curricular review and assessment results, and now offers all upper-division courses on-line. The CC commends the program for this curricular initiative, as it demonstrates a substantial increase in enrollment and connects to UIS' mission to be a leader in on-line education.

The CC is impressed with the high number of general education courses that the Math program offers for the campus. In addition, the program has added several remedial math courses to accommodate the needs of students, and these courses can also aid in retention across campus.

Faculty achievements for the department are impressive, with numerous peer-reviewed articles. Further, the CC was impressed with the faculty's flexibility in accommodating students' needs in terms of the variety of course offerings, as well as teaching on-line.

The CC was also extremely impressed with the phenomenal growth of the program in terms of enrollment and productivity. This growth was acknowledged by the program as being connected to the increase in on-line offerings and general education math courses.
The Math program also serves the Computer Science department and the College of Business and Management by offering courses that specifically are geared to these programs. In addition, the program also serves TEP/Math students with various courses.

In summary, the CC makes the following recommendations with regard to the Mathematical Sciences department:

The CC acknowledges that many math courses are often at capacity, with sections being added on occasion. Some Math department faculty have increased course caps to address the needs of students, however, the CC agrees with the department’s concern that higher course caps could negatively impact the quality of education for students. As a result, the Math department needs additional faculty, as well as more Graduate Assistantships.

The CC recommends that the department explore the possibility of a Master’s program, particularly if this option has the potential to attract additional faculty and students.

c. Jim Ermatinger
   Karen Moranski
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