DRAFT

Program Productivity Methodology

Introduction

In Spring 2009, the Academic Affairs leadership including the Provost, assistant vice presidents, the academic affairs fiscal manager and the associate vice president for institutional effectiveness, initiated the process of determining the productivity levels of the academic programs within the University. This was deemed necessary as we addressed issues of budget cuts, efficiency and effectiveness.

Methodology

The guiding question for this activity was: "How can the University's scarce resources be used most effectively to serve the needs of students and the institutional mission?"

The initial task of the work group was to develop a process for assessing the multiple variables that contributed to programs experiencing high or low productivity. As a result of these discussions within the work group and with the academic deans, it was concluded that data would form a starting point for discussions and considerations. Data in the following areas would be considered:

- Enrollment
- Degrees Awarded
- Student FTEs
- Sponsored Research awards

These metrics were selected because they were the most relevant to revenue and accountability. Objective data for each of the metrics were available through the University data files.

Because of the complexity of academic programs, the data were considered through multiple lenses:

1. A **decision tree model** (see attached). This model walked the data for academic programs through a series of steps designed to address questions of productivity. Overlaid on this approach to reviewing the data was a scoring model as described in #2 below.

2. A **scoring model**. All academic programs were rated based on the criteria of enrollment, degrees awarded, student FTEs, all weighted by degree level, and sponsored research awards. This led to a composite score for all programs. Programs with low scores, possibly indicative of low productivity, were addressed first. All aspects of the low scoring programs were reviewed. Deans were provided with the scoring results and were provided with opportunities to provide additional data to justify outcomes or recommend changes in the identified arenas that emerged with low scores. This process occurred over a period of eight (8) months.
3. A model that **combined an indicator of societal need with productivity**. Need was indicated by whether a program was on the Board of Governors targeted list, in areas of critical needs in education and health, STEM fields, security and emergency services, and globalization.

Based on the above approaches described, it is possible to identify the productivity of all programs in the university. Before doing so, we **are asking for faculty input on the methodology as it is described in this message**. In doing so, it is important to note that the concept of academic productivity is a complex one. Productivity analyses should reinforce the importance of the following qualitative measures:

- Programs identified as critical by the Board of Governors and identified as high demand in the marketplace
- Programs that reinforced the mission of the university;
- Programs that represented the strengths of Florida A&M University and priorities for the future;
- Programs that provided significant potential for the future growth through radical redesign

**Next Steps**

We are asking that faculty review this proposed methodology. The goal of the work group was to view productivity in multiple realms. Please let us know if you agree with the methodology as it is presented or if there are changes or modifications you would suggest. Please offer comments, suggestions, or recommendations as soon as possible. You will soon hear about Focus Groups that are being planned for the first of the year and we would like to discuss the productivity methodology and analyses during that meeting.

The slate of academic programs an institution offers is one of the most important factors that determines the future of an institution. As we engage in the restructuring process, decisions regarding maintaining, suspending or terminating programs must be made with thoughtful consideration of multiple factors and a clear vision of the future.