

Substantive changes in the College of the Sciences since 1999  
Report to the Provost's Office  
In support of the 5-year interim accreditation visit, NWCCU  
Central Washington University

Submitted by:  
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At the time of the 1999 accreditation visit, the College of the Sciences was just beginning its fifth year as an independent college. The offices, budgets, and support staff had separated from arts and humanities even more recently, in 1998, and the college's administrative suite had been established in borrowed space the new science facility. Since that time, the college has made much progress in several areas.

Dean Ninneman, who was incumbent during the last review, left CWU at the end of the 1999-2000 academic year for another position. This was about the time that the upper administration went into transition as well. Dr. Barney Erickson, Professor of Mathematics, was appointed interim dean and served for two years. During 2001-2002, a national search for a dean was unsuccessful and Dr. Meghan Miller, Professor of Geological Sciences, was appointed interim dean. A national search during the 2003-2004 academic year resulted in her continuing appointment as dean of the college.

The roles of the dean, administrative assistant, and office assistant remain the same since the last report. The associate dean's position has been converted to two 50% appointments. The Associate Dean, Curriculum and Undergraduate Studies is the primary administrator for curriculum review, programs at the university centers, student appeals, summer session, and academic reporting such as accreditation review. The Associate Dean, Resource Development develops academic program in support of broadening the resource base of the college and fosters support for faculty scholarship. Turnover and reorganization among the college's support staff has provided funding for a college-level, the college is now recruiting a fiscal specialist to provide budget administration for external grants and contracts. We are also currently searching for a half time development officer to oversee private fund raising and alumni relations for the college.

As an initial step in renewing the 1998-2003 strategic plan, the council of chairs has revised the mission statement of the college to better reflect the centerpiece role of student research in the curriculum and to broaden the focus of faculty of faculty roles.

Refined mission statement:

The mission of the College of the Sciences is to prepare students for enlightened and productive lives by developing knowledge and skills in science. The intertwined endeavors of student learning and research in the classroom, laboratory and field form the centerpiece of the college's dynamic curriculum. Through these activities, faculty mentor students in solving human, social and environmental problems. The College

values faculty teaching, research, and service as interdependent activities that support this mission. [revised Fall, 2003]

The College of the Sciences is home to twelve departments: Anthropology, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geography and Land Studies, Geological Sciences, Law and Justice, Mathematics, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology. Generation of student credit hours during 2003-2004 has increased 18% over 1999-2000, with better-than-average increases in all four natural sciences, Law and Justice, Mathematics, and Resource Management. This measure is rather sensitive to benchmark year, however. During the same interval, the faculty FTE has increased 11%, from 132 to 147 FTE, largely through the addition of term contract faculty. During 2003-2004, 39 of the 107 tenure stream faculty were new since September, 1999. Five new tenure track faculty members are expected in the fall of 2004. The 40 non-tenure track FTE comprise 4 FTE among ten phased retirees, 15 full time non-tenure track appointees, and 21 FTE in part time instruction.

COTS-affiliated interdisciplinary programs include: Asia Pacific Studies that has changed residence to Arts and Humanities, Career Switchers that provides a mid career transition from technical fields to a high school math credential, the Cornerstone program that brings college math to the high schools, Environmental Studies, Ethnic Studies, Gerontology, Latin American Studies, Organization Development, Primate Studies, Resource Management, Science Education, and Women Studies. Project Teach provides an elementary education major and science education minor at Green River Community College; it was new at the time of the last report, has taken hold and is supported by a base allocation from a state transfer enrollment grant. Computer Science and Industrial Engineering Technology (in Education and Professional Studies) have added an ABET-accredited degree track in Computer Engineering Technology. The Law and Justice major and psychology minor are offered at several of the university centers.

A three-year effort by academic affairs leadership to examine support for and administration of interdisciplinary programs is in the final stages, and several of these programs have piloted aspects of the new policy that calls for program directors to report to the dean of the college in which they reside. Primate Behavior & Ecology, Public Policy, and Ethnic Studies have undergone the most intensive revision and development during the interim review period; the interdisciplinary graduate program in Resource Management has piloted the process for developing a program charter and administrative structure. In addition, an interdisciplinary team of natural science, mathematics, and computer science faculty participate in an NSF-funded STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) Talent Expansion Program (STEP) that was funded in the pilot year of its national implementation. This program provides an introductory interdisciplinary natural science curriculum and undergraduate research experiences for freshman targeted for expanding the pool of STEM field graduates, as well as a summer program for high school students. Programs in Environmental Science and American Indian Studies are being formally discussed.

Centers that support instruction, research and public service and are affiliated with or reside in the college include the Center for Teaching and Learning, Center for Spatial Information, the Central Washington Archaeological Survey, the Chimpanzee and Human Communications Institute, the Community Psychological Services Center, the Geodesy Laboratory and Pacific

Northwest Geodetic Array Data Analysis Facility, the Geographic Information Systems Laboratory, CWU Astronomical Observatory, the Microbial Observatory at Soap Lake, and the instructional Murdock Environmental Geochemistry Laboratory, and the Visualization Research Laboratory.

Grants activity within the college has grown since 1999, from 29 to 43 awards annually totaling \$1.5M in 1999-2000 to \$2.8M in 2003-2004. This reflects growth from 48% to 52% of the number of awards university-wide, and a decline from 42% to 35% of the university grants budget. These figures neglect several major university-level projects such as GEARUP, in which COTS plays a prominent role.

In addition to STEP, three new academic programs have been approved at all levels: a B.S. in Environmental Geoscience, an endorsement in Middle Level Math and Science Teaching, and an M.S. in Law and Justice. The two undergraduate programs are each beginning their second year in fall 2004; a five year plan for stabilizing and staffing the Law and Justice program to enable the M.S. offering is being initiated in response to the department's program review during 2003-2004. The greatest growth in the college's faculty has occurred in the Law and Justice department in order to strengthen and sustain the quality of this program during its rapid growth. Four new tenure stream and one full time non-tenure track position have been added to staff this program at four of the university centers. A tenure track faculty member will begin service at the Ellensburg campus this fall. An additional search is currently being conducted at CWU-Lynnwood, and a new position for a department chair is anticipated from a targeted high demand state grant program.

The college of the sciences has welcomed revitalization of program review. During the 2002-2003 academic year, Biological Sciences served as the pilot program for the new process. During the 2003-2004 cycle, which is in its finishing stages, Geological Sciences, Law and Justice, and Psychology have completed review. Chemistry, Computer Science, and Physics have initiated work on their self-study for the 2004-2005 review cycle. Many minor improvements to the review process resulted from the pilot, and this process promises to provide a systematic yet flexible structure for examining diverse academic programs. The mechanism for continued refinement of the process is one strength of the program.

While there have been no new building projects within the college since the biology and chemistry facility opened in 1998, there is some optimism for rejoining currently fragmented departments that are split among many locations. In addition, new facilities at three of the four university centers that house COTS programs are complete (Pierce, Lynnwood, Yakima), and the fourth is under construction (Des Moines). These projects have had a great positive impact on housing and equipping the Law and Justice program, as well as the other COTS curricula that are represented at the centers (Psychology minor, General Studies-Social Science major, and teacher education service courses). On the Ellensburg campus, great needs are centered in programs housed in older facilities that have not been renewed. The relatively small Geography and Geology departments are fragmented such that their faculty, facilities, and academic programs are dispersed among as many as five non-adjacent areas on campus. Our inability to adequately house dynamic academic programs continues to be a major challenge, and there are currently no funded projects to alleviate this pressure.

Nevertheless, two events bode well: The Dean Hall remodel is the university's top priority for the 2005-2007 biennial capital budget request. Drawing on funds allocated for master planning, we completed a pre-design study for Dean Hall this year, poising us to move forward quickly if the bid for construction funding is successful. This project will locate Anthropology and Museum Studies with Geography and Land Studies, and provide better support for their shared graduate program in Resource Management. These moves will relieve space pressure in Lind Hall, allowing Geological Sciences to reunite, optimistically by 2008, after a decade of fragmentation. The vacancy in Farrell Hall may allow alignment of Law and Justice with Sociology and relieve space pressures in the Psychology building where Law and Justice, Political Science, and Psychology are currently housed.

#### Faculty evaluation – College of the Sciences

The College of the Sciences has continued to monitor and develop policy governing faculty evaluation since the focused visit in 2001, primarily within the last two years. During the 2002-2003 academic year, the college undertook a major revision of the policy manual, with particular attention to developing performance standards in each of the three main areas of faculty work and to clarifying the process and rigor of evaluation methods. Much of this work updated the existing policy manual to reflect current values and standards; the manual had not been significantly revised in several years. A major revision was needed to reflect current practice.

In the fall of 2002, an *ad hoc* faculty committee was convened to frame a performance standard in each area and to examine college level processes. By spring quarter, this work was complete and forwarded to the dean and the COTS Council of Chairs. The dean integrated the committee's recommendations into the structure of the existing college policy manual. Finally, the chairs refined the document and took up the topic of integration of the policy into departments within the college. The new standard provided specific performance guidelines in each of the three evaluation areas.

The council of chairs recommended that the new policy be piloted during 2003-2004, with the intention of formal adoption during the spring of 2004. Faculty feedback on the new policies was solicited over the course of the year, through the chairs, in a group meeting with the department personnel committee chairs, through direct e-mail request from the dean to all college faculty, and during public presentations at the March faculty development day. Some feedback was received directly from faculty, as well as through the faculty senate leadership. During the 2003-2004 pilot year, departments began review and modification of their faculty evaluation processes. Revised policies are currently under evaluation by the dean.

During spring quarter, the council of chairs adopted revisions to other sections of the policy manual. We deferred discussion of the personnel standards to the September 2004 retreat, primarily due to time constraints.

At the request of the provost, and in parallel with strengthening the written policies, much more thorough feedback has been given by departments and by the dean during reappointment, tenure, and promotion review. The standard for the rigor and documentation of review has been raised. This has resulted in much better formative review through the reappointment process.

Specific issues that hamper meaningful review persist; some at the college level and some within the faculty code. For instance, the college policy articulates a performance standard for scholarship that applies to faculty who are “candidates for tenure or promotion”. There is no scholarship standard articulated for tenured full professors. In addition, post-tenure review continues to raise issues: while our practice complies with policy 4.1, the faculty code does not support meaningful post-tenure review. In particular, the faculty code allows for the merit review process to fill this role, yet the merit review process is not a formative review process, it is not linked to establishing individual faculty development plans within the college, nor does it look comprehensively at a performance standard in all three areas. This is an area where COTS had made substantive progress under Dean Ninneman in 1999-2000, but changes in leadership have hampered implementation of this program. Finally, the council of chairs recognizes the need for a collegiality standard within COTS.

In summary, the College of the Sciences has made significant progress in monitoring and developing systemic and meaningful faculty evaluation, in particular through the reappointment, tenure, and promotion processes. Over the next year, the college will focus on articulating the formal transition to the new standard, developing performance expectations for tenured full professors, articulating a collegiality standard for all faculty, and in regularizing a formative post-tenure review beyond the current university-wide process.

#### Faculty development – College of the Sciences

Faculty development is administered as travel support within the departments of the college, through internal grants programs at the college and university level, by teaching load reduction and laboratory start up support for new faculty, and through on-campus development programs that are supported by the faculty senate and provided through academic affairs. We have not yet formally aligned professional development with post-tenure review. Beginning in 2002, quarterly faculty development days are designated for university, college, and departmental activities. These are scheduled during the Monday of finals week each quarter, also designated a student reading day; they have become highly valued by departments to support to work of the faculty.

The faculty development travel and grants programs are primarily supported by summer revenues, indirect return on grants, as faculty travel from direct costs in research grants, and, in the case of start up funding, by cost sharing between the college, the provost, and sometimes the office of graduate studies and research. In addition, the faculty senate redistributes summer revenue both per capita full time faculty member and through an internal grants program that supports faculty development projects across the disciplines of the colleges.

The college returns 80% of summer revenues and 88% of the grant indirect revenues it receives to the departments that generate the funds. While this creates incentives to departments for revenue generation, it does not create even support across the departments of the college.