

Dean Response to Program Review Committee Report¹

Department of Applied Statistics and Operations Research
College of Business Administration
September 6, 2006

The Department of Applied Statistics & Operations Research (ASOR) has demonstrated excellence in program quality and assessment, department effectiveness, and contributions to the College of Business Administration (CBA) and the University. The department has very effective leadership in its chair and senior faculty and strengths in faculty recruiting and mentoring, such that all members of the department are active contributors to the mission of the department and the college. For their accomplishments in scholarship, programs, and service, we congratulate the faculty and staff of ASOR, and we would like to add appreciation for their substantial contributions to the CBA and their collegial, effective department operations. The thorough and thoughtful attention given by the department to the self study, external reviewers and Program Review Committee exemplifies the on-going commitment of the ASOR faculty and staff to programming and service that is in concert with the missions of the department, college, and university.

We are in general agreement with the Program Review Committee Report and amplify many of the recommendations, particularly with regard to overall program quality, curricular changes informed by assessment (as well as by the needs of the students and other programs), and graduate student stipends. In three areas of the PRC report and recommendations, we offer additional response.

Research Productivity and External Funding

Considering the teaching and service loads for the department faculty, we believe the research performance is good. The administrative assignments and career stages of the individuals have resulted in variation of the number of publications. However, all of the tenured and tenure-track faculty have been actively involved in research publication during the review period. Similar to other disciplines within the college, the department has struggled to gain external funding. Attention to achieving grant-funded research is important, and the faculty would benefit from a department plan to increase research and funding success. Goals and strategies for individual faculty members may also enhance their productivity and success in research publication, external funding, and scholarship of engagement.

¹ The department's program review was conducted in 2005-06; this response is the consensus of interim Dean Merritt and Dean Rogers.

Engagement Opportunities

We agree with the recommendation of the external reviewers and PRC that the Statistical Consulting Center could expand its mission and activities to include external clients. The Center could play a key role for the CBA and University in meaningful engagement with the business community. Expansion of mission and activities has the potential to serve external clients and establish two-way engagement with the business and other communities, create synergies with other programs in the CBA and other BGSU colleges, and enable research and learning for the faculty and students involved.

A task force should consider revision of the center's mission and propose means, activities, and faculty to accomplish a revised mission. Such an expansion of the center's mission should be planned with the Graduate Dean, CBA Dean, and faculty involved in the Statistical Consulting Center. Task force membership should include other faculty from the CBA and College of Arts and Sciences, as well as external constituents. An initial discussion between the Graduate Dean and the CBA Dean will occur early in the fall 2006 semester to appoint and charge a task force.

Operations Research Graduate Program

During the review process, Dean Merritt expressed reservations to the department about the PRC recommendation for the Master of Science in Computer Science concentration in Operations Research (MSCS-OR). She and Dean Rogers strongly support maintaining an environment that is intellectually rewarding for the OR faculty members and leads to successful scholarship and student programs. However, the target enrollment of 10 to 12 students in the MSCS-OR may not be feasible and, even if achieved, does not adequately address the issues of low projected class sizes and pursuit of successful graduate programming. We have been particularly concerned with enrollments in the advanced OR courses, given other class sizes and program needs in the college. Discussions with the external reviewers and the department chair have led to our concern that the underlying issues are not adequately addressed with more or better recruitment strategies if the projected enrollment is only 10-12 students.

We believe a more reasonable direction is to examine several alternatives, including collaboration with Computer Science faculty and including recommendations of the external reviewers. The department could target alternative groups of students who would benefit from existing OR courses or restructure courses to better fit a wider range of students. Alternatives could include graduate courses or a graduate program more aligned with other programs in the CBA (for example, management information systems, supply chain management or a joint MBA-MS degree), with other BGSU colleges or with other institutions. Collaboration with other programs and institutions also has the potential for achieving grant funding, research publications, and engagement.

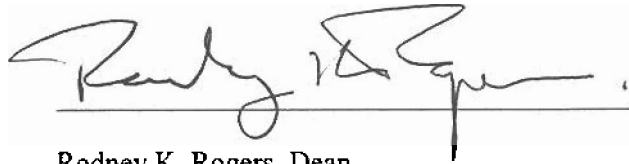
Changes in graduate programming should be examined in the context of a review of the overall College strategy to leverage our resources across areas. We recommend that the department consult with Dean Rogers to form a review committee with members from ASOR, Computer Science and other CBA departments. The committee should submit a review of alternatives and

recommendations for consideration by the deans of CBA and the Graduate College by the end of the 2006-2007 academic year.

Respectfully submitted to the Provost



Nancy J. Merritt, Interim Dean 2005-06



Rodney K. Rogers, Dean

Reviewed by the Provost/VPAA _____ Date _____

_____ concur _____ do not concur for the following reason(s) _____