



To: Eric Lifshin, Chair, University Senate
From: Laurence Kranich, Chair, Graduate Academic Council
Re: President's memo on deactivation of academic programs
Date: November 11, 2010

The Graduate Academic Council was asked to consider the President's proposal to deactivate academic degree programs in Classics, French, Italian, Russian and Theatre. In response, I include the following list of comments and concerns expressed by the members. While many members supported some or all of the points listed, this does not represent a consensus among the Council.

- President Phillip has stated that the selection of targeted programs was “enrollment driven.” Because the targeted programs are not those with the lowest overall enrollment, the full set of criteria for program selection should be clarified.
- The proposed deactivation measures are inconsistent with the University's attempt to internationalize/globalize.
- Program “size” was nominally measured by numbers of majors, minors and graduate students. However, the full measure of the impact of a program should take into consideration the supplemental or supporting role the program plays in serving students from outside the program as well. We are particularly concerned about the effect of the proposed actions on other graduate programs. Deactivation of the language programs, particularly French, may make it more difficult for doctoral students in other programs to fulfill language and tool requirements for their degree. It will also adversely affect students enrolled in the secondary French education masters programs in the School of Education. Consideration needs to be given as to how students in these programs will be able to meet requirements for their graduate degrees.
- We are aware of the historical and incremental process leading to the current allocation of budgetary reductions. Nevertheless, the baseline allocation of such reductions should not be to divide them initially in equal proportions across all divisions and modify them thereafter to reflect priorities. Rather, the baseline should be, first and foremost, to provide essential services and to support the core mission of the University, namely the educational and research mission as defined in the Going Forward Plan, the BAG 3 report and most recently the Strategic Plan (“Expanding knowledge and transforming minds to



shape the future of our community and the world”). Only as a last resort should the core mission be compromised.

- Deactivation of the selected programs would compromise the core mission of the University and result in a weaker institution with lower standing in the academic community. In addition, it would reduce our ability to attract students and to recruit faculty. Moreover, this occurs while there remain inessential areas, such as Athletics, for which support could be reduced or eliminated without compromising the core mission.