October 25, 2007

Dear Colleagues:

For over two years, Academic Governance has been engaged in a discussion about the role of academic program review as a strategy for promoting and enhancing academic quality across campus. On Tuesday, October 23, 2007, Academic Council reviewed the Implementation Plan for a campus-wide process of Academic Program Review.

Under the plan, every academic unit on campus will conduct a self-study at least once every seven years. In collaboration with college deans, a schedule will be established and posted. The Office of the Provost (under the leadership of Associate Provost Linda Stanford) will provide assistance, including access to guidelines and unit-specific data sets. For some units, an external review may be part of the process. The academic program review will involve discussion among faculty advisory committees, chairpersons or directors, deans, and myself. The first round of reviews will begin Spring Semester, 2008.

The heart of the process is the self-study. The self study (guided by a core set of questions) will allow each unit to reflect on what, why, and how well they do what they do, and how it fits within our institutional priorities. The self-study is an intentional process that charges units to consider how they “stack up” with the competition, how they intend to enhance their quality, and to more clearly define their unique role within the institution and to the disciplines to which they contribute.

I want to congratulate Academic Governance on an outstanding job in crafting a set of recommendations that has led to this process. This is one more demonstration of our commitment to our core value of “quality” in all we do.

Sincerely,

Kim A. Wilcox
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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