

Slide 1

## When Successful Programs Are Imperiled: Lessons Learned from Saving WMU's Graduate Psychology Programs

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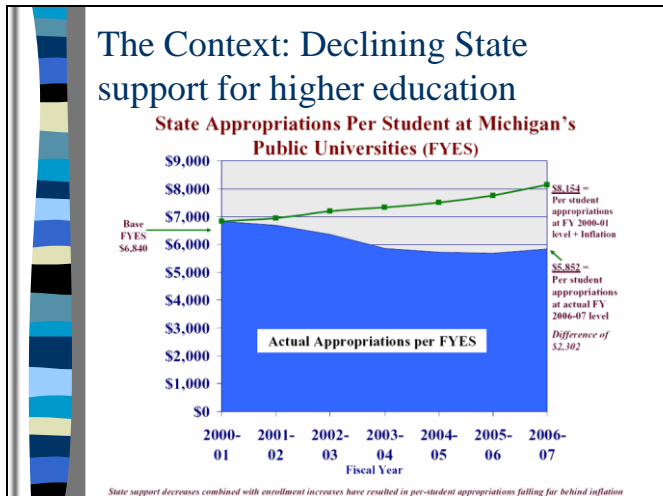
Wayne Fuqua  
Doug Johnson  
Sophie Rubin  
Western Michigan University

Slide 2

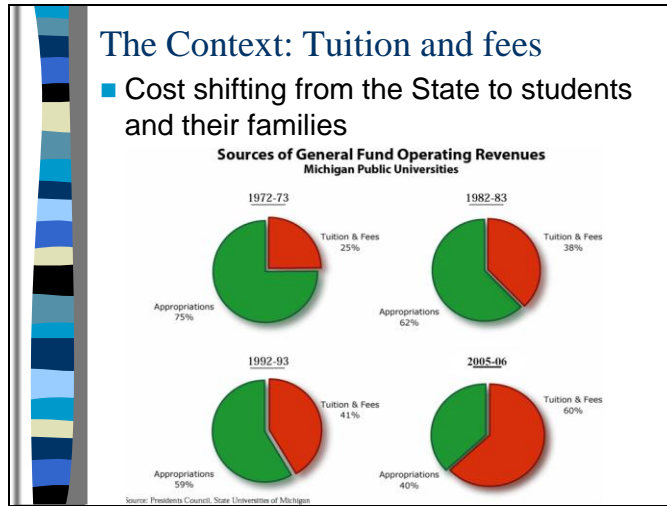
### News Summary



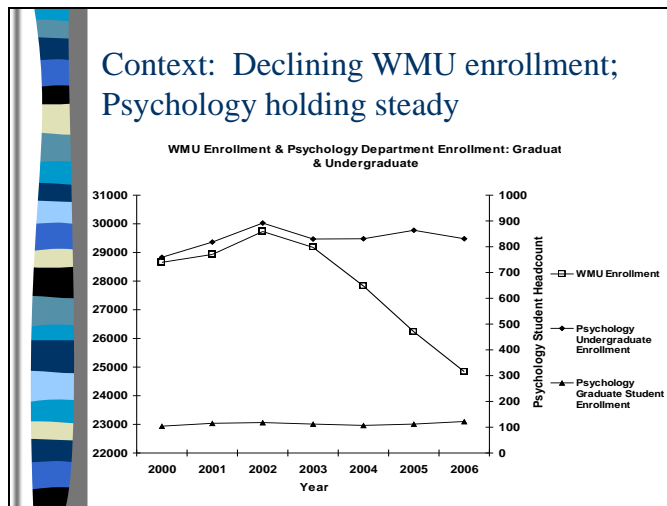
Slide 3



Slide 4





Slide 5



Slide 6

### Administrative Challenges: New President, Changing Provosts

- Dr. Judith Bailey, appointed seventh WMU President, 2003
- Controversial hiring process
- Contract terminated, August 15, 2006
- Dr. Linda Delene, appointed Provost and VPAA, 2004; resigns, May 22, 2006


Slide 7



### Concerns about leadership

- BOT glowing reviews of President Bailey, pay raises, contract extensions
- Faculty Senate Survey in March, 2006 reveals broad dissatisfaction with WMU leadership
- 87% disagreed somewhat or strongly that WMU has improved during Bailey's three year tenure
- Qualitative comments destroyed by WMU--no FOIA
- Chair of Board of Trustees publicly dismissed survey results


Slide 8



### Brief History of Graduate Program Review

- July 19, 2005, Graduate Program Evaluation Charge from Provost Delene
- Rationale--WMU can't support the current number of academic programs
- Goal: Identify programs with highest strategic importance to become investment centers


Slide 9



### GPR review process

- Departments prepare self study (Sept. 2005)
- Dean's review department reports and append ratings and recommendations
- Review teams (Seven review teams, faculty from diverse disciplines)


Slide 10



## Role of Review Teams

- Review Department and Dean's reports
- Interview faculty and graduate students
- March 15, 2006 report recommendation and ratings (1-5, 5 is highest) on each graduate program
- 17 appeals submitted to Faculty Senate Exec Committee
- May 11, 2006: Provost announces final decisions, recommended to President and BOT for July action: "no appeals"


Slide 11



## Review Criteria

- External demand-number and quality of applicants
- Student and program outcomes--student learning, publications, placement, etc.
- Program administration and planning-- mission and vision, collaborations
- Program size & scope: number of students, SCH, faculty publications and grants
- Impact on WMU and community
- Absent-- current and future cost, revenue generate by program (tuition, grants, gifts); PR value, etc.


Slide 12



## Strategic academic priorities

- Quality in health and human services
- Strengths in humanities, languages, math and physical sciences
- Others--humanities, arts, teacher ed, business, engineering


Slide 13



### Outcomes for Industrial Psychology

- Self rating: 5
- Dean rating: 4, enhance and grow
- Team rating: 4, maintain program at approximately current size and scope
- Provost decision: Eliminate IO masters program


Slide 14



### Outcomes for Clinical Psychology

- Self rating: 5
- Dean rating: 5, substantially enhance and grow
- Team rating: 3, maintain program at same size and scope
- Appeal: upheld on procedural grounds and bias--lead reviewer concerned about theoretical orientation of clinical program
- Provost: deny appeal, eliminate program

Slide 15



### Data based evaluation on Review Criteria: Strong on all accounts

- External Demand--200+ applications for 30-40 slots per year
- Quality of students & outcomes--lots of student publications and job placements
- Quality of program administration-
- Productivity-research and scholarship
- Impact of program
- Opportunity analysis--interdisciplinary or new programs

Slide 16

## Our evaluation of alignment with strategic academic priorities

- Well aligned with science and health and human services priorities
- For example: Behavior based safety, Evidence based interventions in Clinical Psychology, Health Psychology and behavioral risk factors

Slide 17

## Critique of GPR Conclusions

- Actions not justified by graduate program review process
- Elimination will cost WMU in net revenue, prestige, connections with the community
- Clinical and IO aligned with health services and science focus
- No direct impact on behavior analysis
- Take action to preserve IO and Clinical

Slide 18

## Can lowly students actually do anything?

WHO HOLDS REAL POWER IN THE DEPARTMENT? [www.phdcomics.com](http://www.phdcomics.com)  
JORGE CHAM © 2004

THE EMBARATTLED DEPARTMENT CHAIR? THE ENTRENCHED FACULTY? THE HOT-SHOT NEW ASSISTANT PROFESSOR? THE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATOR? THE GRAD STUDENTS WHO DO ALL THE WORK?

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Author 2 is a grad student.

WELL, I FEEL LIKE A LOSER.

Slide 19



Slide 20

### Students often have freedom to act denied to faculty

- Faculty
  - Public face / representatives of university
  - Possible retaliation

Slide 21

### Students often have freedom to act denied to faculty

- Students
  - Won't be around long enough for administrators to retaliate without public outrage
  - TAs making class announcements
  - Recruiting parents to cause (as tuition providers & taxpayers, they are stakeholders)
  - There's a lot more of us than other employees
    - Attend Board of Trustees meetings in mass
    - Write letters in mass
    - Make the most noise


Slide 22



## However, requires organization...

- Coordinator / Facilitator: Rebecca Arvans
- Letter campaign: Sarah VerLee
- Public representatives: Tina Goldsmith (clinical) and Doug Johnson (I/O)
- Website: Sophie Rubin and Doug Johnson
- Petition: Sophie Rubin
- Public rally: Candee Jostad and Jay Clore


Slide 23



## Coordinator

- Need to keep everyone on track and make sure nothing neglected
- Meeting agendas / notes

Slide 24




## Letter campaign

- Some students can be tactless
- When writing letters or e-mails, please remember:
  - In your attempt to advocate for the Psychology Department, refrain from disparaging other departments or programs across campus. Do not draw attention to the weaknesses of other programs or question decisions made by the administration to build other programs.
  - Remember to maintain professionalism in your communications. It is okay to demonstrate your disappointment, passion for your training, and strong feelings about this decision. Refrain from lashing out and using ad hominem strategies to undermine the administration (no name calling).
  - Be professional
  - Be respectful
  - Make it personal
- Stagger the sending of letters to keep public awareness steady




Slide 25



## Public representatives

- Individuals to whom other students can refer media to
- Calls to President, Provost, Board of Trustees members



Slide 26



## Website

- Focal point
- Update constantly to keep people visiting
- Keeping name and layout very simple (wmupsy.com)
- Data at bottom
- Simplest take-home message near top

Slide 27



### *Clinical and Industrial Psychology Information*

Perhaps most puzzling is the administration's recommendation to close these two programs that:

- Are in high demand
- Produce graduates that are highly successful at securing jobs
- Consistently produce high levels of research by both faculty and students
- And produce enough tuition revenue from classes taught by faculty and graduate students to pay for themselves

Not only are the clinical and industrial psychology programs internationally recognized and respected, not only do WMU psychology graduates consistently find work, not only do these programs produce extremely high levels of scholarship, but the clinical and industrial psychology programs earn enough revenue to **pay for themselves**.

Furthermore, the clinical and industrial psychology programs **met or exceeded all of the stated review criteria**.

Slide 28

## Petition

- Online petition can grab signatures from remote alumni, parents, peers, etc
- Occasionally need to clean up less than civil remarks
- Mail physical copies of petition to decision makers

Slide 29

## Biggest weapon in student arsenal: the shame / embarrassment factor

- Public perception of poor students getting screwed over ("they're saying my degree is without value...look at the free services we provide...")
- Website with growing number of concerned letters
- Flyers\*
- Newspaper ad\*
- Bumper stickers\*
- Yard signs\*
  - Stagger these things, public can forget quickly
- \*Donations (PayPal)

SAVE CLINICAL AND INDUSTRIAL  
PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS AT WMU!  
**WMUPSY.COM**

Slide 30


Concerned about stories you've heard about psychology program closures at WMU?

Want to help save these programs that provide valuable mental health & business services to the community?


Go to:  
**WMUPSY.COM**

Learn more  
Sign the petition  
Save these programs

From the graduate students of the  
WMU psychology department




Slide 31



### Biggest weapon in student arsenal: the shame / embarrassment factor

- Fortunate position of data being available
- But, don't focus on data
  - Anecdotes of personal stories, disappointment, shock, anger
- Make sure decision makers are painfully aware of news coverage
  - Many live out of town
  - Mail fact sheets, data, press clippings, petition, DVD of TV appearances, cover letter mentioning website to Board of Trustees, President, Provost (send via certified mail)
  - Call them


Slide 32



### Reactions to GPR Decisions

- May 18, 2006
  - President Judi Bailey announces appeals process--refuses to set aside GPR recommendations from Provost's Office
- May 19, 2006
  - Faculty Union schedules no confidence vote for Provost Linda Delene
- May 22, 2006
  - Provost Linda Delene resigns effective May 22, prior to "no confidence" vote


Slide 33



### The outcome?

- Appeals process and Bailey decisions:
- Clinical Psychology reinstated
- Industrial Psychology--appeals recommended consolidate with Behavior Analysis Program; Bailey, maintain with condition to increase enrollment in MA program
- Coincidental outcome?: BOT terminates Bailey contract, 500K pay out, takes job at American Association of State Colleges and Universities

Slide 34



## Lessons learned

- State economy, WMU challenges as context
- Program reviews are inevitable and desirable  
integrity and attention to evaluation guidelines
- Institutional data can be absent, inaccurate or  
misconstrued--check accuracy--collect your own!
- Don't compare apples and apple groves- programs  
within Psychology against entire departments
- Alumni and students are effective advocates--often in  
ways that faculty cannot
- Use the Media--be responsive, talk in sound bites  
and metaphors, provide background and other leads
- The Board of Trustees--how to maintain  
independence but add performance guidelines--hiring  
and evaluating President