

CBUFA / CBU Article 37

Bona Fide Academic Reasons - CBU Perspective

CBU's resource distribution indicates that a very large proportion of them are directly linked to the delivery of its primary outputs which are teaching and research. This is true in many ways, whether we look at human resources, the major activities which are the life of the institution or whether we are considering its budget. What we can consider the 'academic side' of the institution is large in comparison to the rest.

In the present circumstances of a new MOU with the Province and declining enrollments, the pressure for a realignment of the University's resource distribution has been inescapable. In that inescapable realignment, much pressure was brought to bear on the 'academic side' of the institution by the sheer nature of its size within the total (69.47% of the total)

In planning the realignment, which necessarily meant reductions in the 'academic side', the first attempt was to establish protection for the primary functions of teaching and research as they impact students in particular (teaching represents 47.73% of the total). This was accomplished in part by declaring that no programs would be cut. A few other areas were also protected and appear in the following list:

1. The academic programs
2. The library (more particularly maintenance of collections and acquisitions)
3. Student services (with reconfiguration to bring additional efficiencies)
4. Research support services
5. Teaching and Learning support and Quality Assurance support services

The areas left for impact were:

1. Academic support units (several functions were regrouped (TLC and QA support), transferred to other units (IT and Distance education) or simply eliminated (ESL)
2. Academic program areas where additional efficiencies could be identified without cutting programs.

Academic program areas where additional efficiencies are possible

All program areas were analyzed to identify program enrolments, demand for courses, number of sections, etc. This part of the realignment exercise identified where early retirements could be used as areas of impact without replacement and those which needed replacement.

Early retirement incentives were developed to encourage timely employment terminations without reverting to layoffs. Although this program was extremely helpful in addressing the realignment targets it did not produce enough results to meet the financial obligations of the institution as outlined in the first section of this document. It also did not always coincide perfectly with those academic program areas where impacts could be absorbed without a program cut. The total number of early retirees did not reach the level that would have met all of the planning targets and some early retirements have to be replaced in order to avoid program cuts.

The institution is therefore in the process of completing its realignment and has identified areas of academic activity which can be impacted because of some identified oversupply, thus avoiding program cuts. Those areas are:

1. Oversupply of resources for anthropology
2. Oversupply of resources for chemistry
3. Oversupply of resources for mathematics