

Articles

## **Review leads to sweeping changes in grad programs**

May 11, 2006

KALAMAZOO--After nearly a year of reviewing graduate-level degree offerings, Western Michigan University today announced sweeping changes campus wide designed to reallocate resources so that every graduate program has the fiscal support necessary to excel.

WMU President Judith I. Bailey and Provost Linda Delene outlined the changes as part of a presentation to a May 11 meeting of WMU's Faculty Senate. The comprehensive plan announced includes development of new programs, allocation of new financial resources for 15 degree programs, mergers of several programs and elimination of programs that do not match the University's strategic plan and resources.

"What will emerge from our Graduate Program Review is a graduate education environment with increased strength in the sciences, engineering, education and health care--exactly the strengths that will position WMU to meet Michigan's needs in the coming years and address national developments," Bailey said. "We'll continue and enhance our current strengths in disciplines as diverse as engineering management and medieval studies. And we'll build additional national recognition in some important new areas."

The decisions announced are the result of a Graduate Program Review launched in July 2005. The effort involved review teams made up of faculty members and department chairs from every part of the University. Recommendations were developed by department chairs, deans and the University's academic leadership.

"I have accepted the recommendations and intend to take them, exactly as you see them this afternoon, to the Board of Trustees in July," Bailey told the gathering. "I have confidence in the process that was followed and in the recommendations that have been finalized in academic affairs."

Bailey said WMU, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary as a university in 2007, must build on its legacy and meet the external and internal needs of its next period of growth.

"In a very real sense," she said, we are "self-funding our strategic move forward by reallocating existing resources." The decisions, she noted, do not constitute a reduction in funds but rather a redeployment of funds that will ensure the University's graduate programs become "stronger, larger and more vibrant."

Bailey said the moves outlined May 11 will allow WMU to invest in programs that have great capacity for enrollment growth and increased levels of quality, and the changes will lead to savings that will be reallocated and reinvested in graduate education over the coming years. The amount of funding available for reallocation is expected to be in excess of \$2 million.

If approved by WMU trustees, the changes would become effective with the start of the fall 2007 semester. They include the following strategies.

The addition of two new doctoral degrees will be proposed--in communication and medieval studies. Four new master's programs also will be created--in ethno history and material culture, environmental studies, teaching and world languages.

New financial resources will be invested in 15 graduate degree programs campuswide, ranging from engineering management and science education to music, speech pathology and audiology, and medieval studies. Current funding levels will be maintained for 11 other doctoral programs and 38 master's programs.

The merger and unification of some programs will take place to achieve synergies in talent and programming as well as to realize greater administrative efficiency. For instance, four separate doctoral programs in engineering will be unified into a single degree program with four concentrations, while two doctor of philosophy programs in evaluation will be unified into one. In addition, 24 master's-level programs will merge, with the precise final configuration for those mergers being determined during campus discussions in the coming months. The mergers will establish the curricular structure needed to set clear priorities in resource allocation.

Eight doctoral programs and 13 master's programs will be eliminated. Programs at the doctoral level that are slated for elimination are: applied economics, clinical psychology, comparative religion, computer science, public administration, school psychology, Spanish and statistics. Specialist degrees in school psychology and educational leadership also will be closed. Master's programs to be eliminated are: applied sociology, art (Master of Fine Arts), art (Master of Arts), biostatistics, earth science, elementary school teaching, industrial psychology, middle school teaching, molecular biotechnology, operations research, socio-cultural foundations, teaching of geography and teaching of music.

The programs eliminated involve about 240 students or 5 percent of WMU's 4,800 graduate students. Students in the programs slated for closure will have the opportunity to complete their degrees. Those in doctoral programs will have up to seven years to finish their studies from the time they began their programs. Students at the master's level will have up to six years from their program start date to complete degrees.

The changes will not result in layoffs of tenured or tenure-track faculty, but faculty and staff assignments will be adjusted to reflect shifting priorities. [Complete details](#) are available through the Office of the Provost Web site. The full text of Bailey's Faculty Senate presentation is available through [www.wmich.edu/president](http://www.wmich.edu/president).

**Media contact:** Cheryl Roland, (269) 387-8400, [cheryl.roland@wmich.edu](mailto:cheryl.roland@wmich.edu)

WMU News  
Office of University Relations  
Western Michigan University  
1903 W Michigan Ave

Kalamazoo MI 49008-5433 USA  
(269) 387-8400  
www.wmich.edu/wmu/news

## WMU to retool graduate programs

Friday, May 12, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583

As part of sweeping changes in graduate education, Western Michigan University plans to merge 24 master's-level programs, cut 21 degrees, create six advanced degrees and boost funding in some areas.

Results of a nearly yearlong review of graduate programs were revealed Thursday at a Faculty Senate meeting.

About 5 percent of graduate students, or 240 students, will see their programs discontinued, officials say. No new enrollees will be taken in those programs after Aug. 1, but current students will have several years to complete their degrees.

How many programs will remain after the 24 master's-level programs are merged isn't yet known. "It is some number considerably less than 24," WMU spokeswoman Cheryl Roland said.

No tenured or tenure-track faculty members will face layoff as a result of reorganizing, officials say.

University leaders say the changes are intended to align funding with the programs that will give WMU the best return on its investment during a period of tightening resources and increasing competition for students.

"We are at one of those rare times in the university's history when we have the opportunity to make a dramatic change, a quantum improvement," WMU President Judith I. Bailey told faculty members.

What will emerge "is a graduate education environment with increased strength in the sciences and engineering, education and health care -- exactly the strengths that will position WMU to meet Michigan's needs in the coming years and address national developments," she said.

Hundreds wait to get into certain programs, but the university can't admit them because it would stretch resources, WMU Provost Linda M. Delene told faculty members, declining to name specific programs.

Others, she said, have few students and few trying to enroll.

"We have been talking all year about rebalancing the academic portfolio," Delene said.

For instance, in the master's degree in elementary-school teaching enrollment "numbers have been going down and faculty (members) generally have been dissatisfied with the program," DeWayne Anderson, education chairman in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Leadership, said after Thursday's meeting.

"They're interested in replacing it with something better," he said.

Among programs also to be eliminated are Western's doctoral degrees in comparative religion, computer science and public administration.

Medieval studies, however, is looking to add a doctoral degree, capitalizing on Western's internationally known Medieval Institute.

“We bring the medievalists here from around the world and we don’t have a doctorate in the field,” Delene said, referring to Western’s annual medieval conference which brings in thousands of convention-goers each May.

A new Master of Arts degree in teaching will be developed.

More faculty members will be assigned to the in-demand master’s-level physician’s-assistant program, opening it up to more students.

While these programs are being rewarded for popularity, psychology chairman Wayne Fuqua said he wonders why several prominent degrees in his department are being cut.

Plans are to cut a doctoral degree and Specialist in Arts program in school psychology. A doctoral degree in clinical psychology and master’s degree in industrial/organization psychology also will be phased out.

“As I look at the seven criteria, Linda, it looks (like) these programs do very well on every single one,” Fuqua told Delene.

Some of the criteria used in evaluating programs included student demand for a program, its ability to attract external funding and the quality of program outcomes, such as graduates’ job placement.

Fuqua said that in clinical psychology 100 applicants vie for five slots, there’s 100 percent student job placement after graduation, and, because so many of the graduate students teach undergraduates, it subsidizes the cost of the graduate program.

“We think the resources that are going to be required to keep that program going and accredited are too much,” Delene said of the decision to drop the program.

That disappointed Krystyna Orizondo, a master’s degree student in industrial and organizational psychology.

“I turned down tons more money at other places just to come here to work with these professors just to get this degree from this institution because, in our field, it is the place to go,” the 23-year-old said.

She’s said she’s afraid faculty members will leave the program for opportunities elsewhere, which may prompt her to go, too.

WMU officials expected some of that kind of fallout. Nationally, when degree programs at universities are merged or reconfigured, some 50 percent of students move into companion programs, 25 percent finish the programs they started, and 25 percent will leave, Delene said.

The recommendations are scheduled to go in July to the board of trustees.

A summary of the proposal and the full report are available online at [http://www.wmich.edu/provost/AcademicProgramReviews/graduate\\_index.html](http://www.wmich.edu/provost/AcademicProgramReviews/graduate_index.html).

## **WMU faculty chafes at proposals Profs challenge program changes**

Monday, May 15, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583

Western Michigan University statistics professor Mike Stolline was shocked when he read that the doctoral program in statistics would be eliminated and his department might be merged with another.

He saw no explanation on a paper that revealed the disturbing news.

“I’ve been here almost 40 years, spent my life building this program and it is with sadness that I read this,” Stolline said last week, as myriad changes to graduate education were announced at a Faculty Senate meeting attended by hundreds of professors.

Two questions dog Stolline: Why, and why is this nonnegotiable?

After a yearlong review, Western administrators announced plans to merge two dozen master’s-level programs and cut almost as many degrees, while developing six new advanced degrees and increasing funding to targeted areas.

WMU’s faculty union is planning to meet Thursday to discuss the dramatic changes, which have left some professors surprised, some upset and others complaining that faculty members haven’t been involved enough in decision-making.

A faculty union e-mail told members this is the latest example of shared governance between the faculty and administration being eroded at Western.

“There was almost no specific, substantive rationale -- based on academic quality or financial analysis or enrollment data or market potential -- for the proposed changes,” said a letter from WMU’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors to members.

“How, then, is it possible to view this plan as good for Western?” it said. “We are being asked to accept this plan based on unsupported assertion.”

Alan Rea, information officer for the WMU-AAUP, told a Kalamazoo Gazette reporter Saturday, “You must remember these are faculty who are experts in their field.”

Rea said it isn’t only decisions about program cuts that concern professors.

“Some departments were surprised (that) all of a sudden they were doing a new degree,” he said.

The recommendations are slated to go to the Board of Trustees in July, and there will be no avenue to appeal decisions.

Reshuffling of funds and programs is imperative, administrators say, to strengthen the university and to strategically grow enrollment.

“We are using this opportunity to say, ‘Here are areas we want to become strong in,’” WMU President Judith I. Bailey said recently of the reorganization.

Of faculty involvement, she said: “They’ve participated for a year. Everybody has had at least one, if not multiple, shots at this,” in committees and through the Faculty Senate.

“It’s a very complex decision,” Bailey said. To focus only on a particular degree being cut, “you miss the point of the synergy of merging program A with program B, which means you may not need Program C,” she said.

Bailey said there are some areas “where we know we have pent-up student demand. We could have more students tomorrow if we had the resources to teach them.”

The physician’s-assistant program, for instance, is a popular program currently at capacity that will get additional instructors.

But if growing enrollment is an ideal, wonders George Haus, who coordinates a program that trains special-education teachers, why is there a plan to limit enrollment within the College of Education?

WMU Provost Linda Delene said the answer is balance.

“We have to have higher-quality graduate and doctoral programs in the College of Education. That college has been hamstrung and handicapped because of enrollment mandates that are simply not sustainable, and they don’t move the quality axis of the university ahead,” she said.

Cutting several degrees in psychology was also a shock to professors and students. They say the department has nationally recognized programs that are in high demand and attracts external funding -- basically meeting criteria evaluators used to review graduate programs.

“I was an undergraduate here. I’ve lived in Kalamazoo eight years. I purposely stayed for my master’s, simply because of faculty members we have are known ... not only nationally but internationally,” said Angie Lebbon, who will complete her master’s degree in industrial and organizational psychology this year.

But WMU’s provost says the university cannot afford to offer the array of graduate degrees it once did with the resources it now has.

“We don’t want anyone to think ... we have had poor programs,” Delene said. “We just have to come up with a different strategy for supporting graduate programs to be competitive.”

WMU administrators plan to start reviewing the undergraduate programs next year.

## **WMU professors call meeting on graduate program changes**

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

**By Alan Rea**

On May 11, more than 300 faculty members witnessed, with increasing dismay, the announcement of a package of changes in graduate programs that will be enacted, unless we step up now, at the July 14 meeting of the Western Michigan University Board of Trustees.

If you look at the specifics, some programs may be enhanced, while quite a few will be cut or curtailed. The changes were presented as a done deal, with no possibility of discussion or appeal. In at least two instances, programs identified for significant expansion were caught by surprise -- the departments had not been asked if that was what they wanted.

There was almost no specific, substantive rationale -- based on academic quality, financial analysis, enrollment data or market potential -- for the proposed changes. How, then, is it possible to view this plan as good for Western? We are being asked to accept this plan based on unsupported

There is a larger, more long-term issue -- the loss of the faculty’s voice about the curriculum at Western Michigan University.

Here is the Statement of Principle in Article 23 of our Agreement:

“By virtue of their command of their disciplines, university faculty have as a unique resource, the abilities to assist in the governance of the departments in which they will exercise their respective disciplines. Faculty, therefore, should participate in the governance of their departments in order to create and maintain harmonious relationships among colleagues, and to fashion and maintain the departments in such a way as to make them maximally appropriate for instruction, research, service, and other professional activities of the disciplines. Fundamentally, what is desirable and what is intended by the sections that follow is to ensure meaningful participation by departmental faculties, with the ultimate power of decision-making by Western, but with an assurance of procedural regularity and fair play.”

What we have experienced this year in the conduct of the graduate program reviews, and on May 11 at the meeting of the Faculty Senate, is a significant abrogation of faculty rights to participate in the governance of their departments.

Decisions have been made about cutting and enhancing departmental programs with no significant input by the faculty who know the most about them. It is almost impossible to imagine that this would have been the plan if there had been full faculty participation.

If we wish to exercise our voices about this plan, the time is upon us.

Accordingly, we invite faculty to a special-purpose chapter meeting on Thursday.

Together, we will develop our plan for what is good for Western.

Together, we will address the analysis of the changes that have been proposed, and the challenges to shared governance that confront us.

Please confer with as many of your colleagues as possible and come to our meeting -- at 4 p.m. Thursday in Rooms 157-159 of the Bernhard Center -- to begin our action campaign.

Alan Rea is the information officer for the Western Michigan University chapter of the American Association of University Professors. This was written on behalf of himself and the officers of the WMU-AAUP.

## **WMU faculty to take vote on provost**

Friday, May 19, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

**[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583**

Western Michigan University's faculty union passed a resolution Thursday to conduct a no-confidence vote on Provost Linda Delene, who heads up academic affairs.

A union official said the censure move is due in part to the way Delene handled a graduate-degree review at Western, which ultimately recommended cutting some programs, merging others and creating several new degrees.

But professors were upset that it was presented as a done deal with no opportunity for appeals, saying the process flew in the face of shared governance.

In a letter last week, the union said professors were being asked to support changes not accompanied by any rationale, financial analysis or market study.

The no-confidence resolution Thursday came after WMU President Judith I. Bailey told faculty members at the union meeting that she was now offering up an appeals process for programs slated for elimination.

"I respect the principle of shared governance and feel there is no area of the university in which it is more appropriate for us to engage and discuss both the need for such decisions and the process that informed those decisions," Bailey said in a letter to the faculty Thursday.

Bailey said it was imperative that faculty members make and complete appeals in time for the mid-July Board of Trustees meeting, where she will present the decisions on the graduate program review.

But faculty members on Thursday also passed a resolution asking that the graduate-degree changes not be considered by the WMU Board of Trustees in July, as planned.

Bailey was not present during the resolution votes.

Alan Rea, union information officer, said the no-confidence vote was not just about the graduate-program review. He would not elaborate.

"There is a larger, more, long-term issue -- the loss of the faculty's voice about the curriculum at Western Michigan University," a letter last week from the WMU's chapter of the American Association of University Professors said.

In March, a Faculty Senate survey on both Delene and Bailey suggested hundreds of faculty members were not pleased with their leadership.

The Kalamazoo Gazette was unable to reach Delene for comment.

It's been about a year since administrators and faculty members began a critical look at Western's more than 100 graduate programs. Administrators last week presented as a done deal their plans to merge, cut or grow certain master's-degree and doctoral programs over the next several years. Under the plan, 21 degrees would be cut, two dozen master's-degree programs merged, six new advanced degrees added and funding boosted in certain areas.

Bailey is establishing a review committee of eight faculty members and two academic administrators to consider appeals. A report of the appeal committee will go directly to the president and then be sent to the board of trustees. All appeals must be completed and submitted to Bailey no later than June 29.

## **Provost Linda Delene resigns**

May 19, 2006

KALAMAZOO--Western Michigan University President Judith I. Bailey announced today she has accepted "with regret" a decision by Dr. Linda M. Delene to resign her post as WMU's provost and vice president for academic affairs, effective with the close of the business day on Monday, May 22.

Delene, who has been provost since 2004, will take a yearlong administrative leave before returning to the faculty of the Department of Marketing in August 2007. She first joined the faculty in 1977. Her long tenure at WMU has included roles as an award-winning educator and student advisor; researcher; officer of the American Association of University Professors, the faculty union; president of the Faculty Senate; and the leader of dozens of campuswide initiatives.

Her accomplishments as an administrator include implementation of a new Student Information System and leadership of a campuswide effort in 2001 to revise WMU's mission statement. For the past year, she has led a campuswide evaluation of the University's graduate programming.

"Because I have come to know Provost Delene well over the past two years, I know that her goals have always been to preserve and enhance the quality of this University and provide the finest academic environment for the students we serve," Bailey said in a brief message to the University community. "Those goals must continue to set the direction for this University."

**Media contact:** Cheryl Roland, (269) 387-8400, [cheryl.roland@wmich.edu](mailto:cheryl.roland@wmich.edu)

WMU News  
Office of University Relations  
Western Michigan University  
1903 W Michigan Ave  
Kalamazoo MI 49008-5433 USA  
(269) 387-8400  
[www.wmich.edu/wmu/news](http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news)

## WMU provost resigns under pressure

Saturday, May 20, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583

The faculty at Western Michigan University won't have the chance to vote no confidence on Provost Linda Delene as planned.

Delene offered her resignation Friday to WMU President Judith I. Bailey.

"I have accepted her decision with regret," Bailey told faculty and staff in a letter in which she characterized the resignation as Delene's decision.

Delene, 66, has been a fixture at the university for nearly 30 years. She will take a yearlong leave before returning to the faculty of the marketing department in August 2007.

"Because I have come to know Provost Delene well over the past two years, I know that her goals have always been to preserve and enhance the quality of this university and provide the finest academic environment for the students we serve," Bailey wrote.

There was no reason given for the resignation, which is effective Monday, and the Gazette was unable to reach Delene for comment Friday.

But her resignation comes a day after the faculty union passed a resolution to have the no-confidence vote, in part because of how Delene handled a graduate-degree review, according to a union official.

The results of the review were released to faculty on May 11.

Some professors were galled that certain graduate programs were cut without specific explanation and initially without an appeals process.

Bailey announced Thursday that she reversed that decision and will allow for appeals.

But union spokesman Alan Rea said Friday that the discord also goes deeper than the graduate-program issue. He declined to explain, however, and said he didn't want to now, particularly in light of the resignation.

"It looks like it would be a moot point," said Rea, information officer for WMU's chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

"We're ready to move forward in shared governance with the president," he said.

But it's the second time in little more than two months that faculty members have formally suggested a referendum on Delene's leadership.

The Faculty Senate in March conducted a survey, asking faculty members to rate Bailey's and Delene's performance. Some 500 faculty members -- or about 50 percent -- took part in the survey.

Neither Bailey nor Delene came out well in the responses.

For example, in the survey, 79 percent somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed that Delene "supported a spirit of cooperation and goodwill among units of Academic Affairs," which she headed.

Academic Affairs oversees all of WMU's academic programs.

Some 82 percent somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed that WMU improved in quality as an institution during her tenure.

The final question asked faculty members to rate their confidence in the provost's leadership, and 80 percent strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed they were confident in it.

Delene became chief of academic affairs almost two years ago when former Provost Daniel Litynski resigned and returned to the faculty.

Over the years, "she has been an award-winning educator, productive researcher, student advisor, faculty union officer, president of the Faculty Senate and the leader of dozens of campuswide initiatives," Bailey said.

Delene started as an associate professor of marketing in 1977 and rose up the ranks.

"People have a lot respect for her vision and her experience as a scholar," said Katharine Cummings, associate dean of the College of Education, who has worked closely with Delene in recent years.

Initially, her placement as provost was going to be a two-year interim post with a national search to follow it. But last summer, Bailey asked that the board of trustees make Delene's promotion permanent.

Before becoming provost, she was vice provost and associate vice president for academic planning and assessment.

"She got caught up in the power," said Joseph Kretovics, a WMU professor and vocal critic of the administration.

He said she micromanaged and could be dismissive.

"She isolated herself from the faculty, and that's truly unfortunate because for 99 percent of her career, she has always looked out for the best interests of the university. It seems, to me at least, she took a wrong turn," he said.

He added that Delene "has given incredible service to this institution and that has to be recognized, and I've talked to several colleagues of mine (and they) say the same thing," he said.

## **Proposed cut of clinical psychology program would hurt mentally ill**

Sunday, May 28, 2006

**By Douglas W. Woods**

I'm writing to express my dismay at the recent decision by Western Michigan University's president and provost to eliminate the Ph.D. program in clinical psychology.

I am a graduate of WMU, where I proudly received my Ph.D. in clinical psychology in 1999. The recent decision concerns me for a number of reasons, which I will outline below. I hope the WMU and greater Kalamazoo community considers this letter, and the points it contains, and encourages the WMU Board of Trustees to overturn WMU President Judith I. Bailey's recommendations.

My first concern is that the decision to eliminate the clinical psychology Ph.D. program contradicts President Bailey's own vision for WMU. Bailey has stated that the purpose of the Graduate Program Review was to "increase (WMU's) strength in the sciences and engineering, education and health care." and to "build additional national recognition for other WMU programs.

Frankly, eliminating a productive, research-based, grant-obtaining program with a strong existing national reputation for training mental health practitioners makes little sense in light of the president's own stated goals. The clinical program brings in more than \$200,000 annually to WMU through grants and contracts, and annually publishes or presents more than 60 scholarly works in journals or at regional and national conferences.

It annually draws well over 100 extremely strong applicants from across the nation and produces four to six new top-of-the-line psychologists per year who help meet the high demand for doctoral-level psychologists. Likewise, WMU has an established national reputation. It is one of perhaps two programs in the country that has a strong behavioral clinical program. It is well-known and respected for this nationally and internationally. WMU's clinical program has a strong presence in organizations, such as the Association for Behavior Analysis and the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies and is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association as an exceptional training program in clinical psychology.

As another testament to the program's national reputation, when I've spoken with my colleagues (non-WMU grads) from across the country, and told them about Bailey's decision to eliminate the clinical program, they have been uniformly stunned and bewildered. Never in their wildest imaginations would they have envisioned a scenario where WMU would close down such a strong and successful program. Their reaction leads to my second concern about the decision.

This decision reflects poorly on WMU and, by extension, the graduates of the clinical program. Frankly, because of this decision, I'm embarrassed to say I am a WMU alumnus. I give invited addresses at academic and medical institutions across the country and, until now, I have always been proudly introduced as having received my Ph.D. in clinical psychology from WMU. Should the decision to cut the clinical program be maintained, I will ask that WMU's name be withheld from my introduction.

Cutting a strong mental health training program in the face of an overwhelming mental health crisis in this country and the state of Michigan is an affront to the public. Should this decision be allowed to stand, I will be ashamed to say that I graduated from WMU.

Relatedly, have the president and provost considered what the decision to eliminate the program implicitly says to potential employers about the quality of WMU graduates? If I knew WMU had closed the program, and I had a WMU clinical graduate in front of me as a job applicant, I would be asking myself, "... If WMU didn't even think the program was strong enough to continue, how strong could the applicant with a WMU degree be?"

A third reason I'm concerned about this decision involves the message it sends to the most vulnerable in our society. What message is sent to those suffering from, and those with family members who suffer from, mental illness? The message it sends is that WMU doesn't care about you.

Not only would closing the program result in the immediate elimination of mental health services through the loss of sites run or supported by WMU faculty and students, but it would have a longer-term impact on the mental health delivery systems in Michigan and the country through the loss of well-trained psychologists. Just know that if the program is allowed to be eliminated, then thousands of children and adults from Michigan and across the country will be forced to suffer with their mental illness because of the loss of future graduates from the WMU program.

A fourth reason I am concerned is that the president and provost seem to believe (inaccurately) that not enough resources can be dedicated to the program to establish its national reputation or make it a top-caliber program. I have two issues with this: First, in its circle of behavioral psychology, WMU's clinical program is a top-caliber program. Second, from what I can see, when one takes into account the funds generated from extramural grants/contracts and tuition dollars generated by courses taught by teaching assistants and clinical faculty, the program is actually in the black. Thus, given that WMU has an established reputation as a top-caliber program in behavioral clinical psychology, and it contributes positively to the university bottom line, the argument that the program would require too many additional resources to get it up to speed seems either uninformed or disingenuous.

In closing, I ask that this newspaper's editors thoughtfully consider the actions before the Board of Trustees and the greater WMU community. Please consider whether closing the clinical psychology program is within Bailey's own stated agenda of "increasing (WMU's) strength in the sciences and engineering, education and health care." If you agree with Bailey's decision, then put no pressure on the trustees and understand that you will have me and many other alumni of WMU who no longer wish to be associated with the university.

More importantly, the Kalamazoo Gazette will have on its conscience the fact that you essentially closed the door on the faces of thousands more struggling to find effective treatments for themselves or their loved ones struggling with mental illness. However, if you think Bailey may be making a mistake in this recommendation or has perhaps moved too hastily in this decision, then please encourage the Board of Trustees to overturn her recommendation. Once this

program is gone, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to resurrect. The decision is yours. Please choose wisely.

Douglas W. Woods is an associate professor of psychology and the director of clinical training at the University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee. He resides in Bayside, Wis.

## **Proposed changes in university programs are troubling**

Wednesday, May 31, 2006

**By David J. Duchamp**

As a concerned citizen, scientist and mathematician who has been following the progress of Western Michigan University for the past 40 or so years, I read with considerable surprise your article on the proposed blanket changes in graduate-degree programs.

If these changes are implemented as proposed, some degree programs that are regarded nationally as the strongest programs of the university will be discarded.

I don't doubt that both the faculty and the administration of WMU desire to grow and improve the university, and I recognize the need for an institution to make changes in order to grow and improve. However, simple logic dictates that any institution, public or private, should grow and improve by building on its strengths. Throwing away strengths in the hope of improving on perceived weaknesses is a recipe guaranteed to produce a weaker institution.

I am not affiliated with WMU in any capacity, nor do I have any family members currently attending WMU. And I readily admit to not being familiar with many of the graduate-degree programs proposed for changes.

But among the ones I know something about, some of WMU's strongest are proposed for cutting. I don't have complete information, so I will not mention any specific programs by name. The articles I have read, for example, do not contain any information on enrollment or cost of each program proposed for cutting.

If graduate-degree program changes are to be a positive change for WMU, it is very important that there be a consensus, among faculty, administration, students, prospective students, alumni, and the general public, that each proposed change is for the greater good of the university and its students.

With this goal in mind, I strongly urge the WMU Board of Trustees not to rubber-stamp the published list of cuts and additions to graduate-degree programs. I urge them instead to review each proposed change separately, on its own merits, in full detail and in an open forum with all relevant data and discussion made available to the press, and therefore to the general public.

One might argue that the board of trustees is not an appropriate forum for such a process but, under the current situation at WMU, it is apparently the only forum where the needed open discussion can occur.

Public support for WMU, and therefore public support for public funding for WMU, has been negatively affected by the continued bickering between administration and faculty in the past few years. The time has arrived for the board of trustees to take positive steps to correct this negative image. The open discussion proposed above would be a strong step in that direction. It is important for West Michigan that WMU continue to prosper and grow. This can only happen if WMU has strong public support.

David J. Duchamp has a doctorate from the California Institute of Technology. He resides in Kalamazoo.

## **Clinical Psychology program cut devalues degrees already earned**

Thursday, June 1, 2006

**By Jenifer M. Cullen**

I am writing this letter in response to the decision to eliminate Western Michigan University's Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program. As a recent graduate of this particular program, I am stunned and shocked that such an outstanding program that is in such high demand would be considered for discontinuation.

The program trains and successfully graduates numerous scientist-practitioners each year. Closing this particular program would go against the exact rationale proposed by President Judith I. Bailey, in which she states that WMU wishes to increase its strength in "sciences, engineering, education and health care." Those trained in clinical psychology have a direct impact on science, teaching and education and health care, specifically the mental health of our society.

As a student in this program, I invested numerous years of hard but rewarding work, not to mention a great deal of money into the doctorate. It saddens me to think that this degree will be devalued because it will have come from a program that closed a few years after I graduated.

I would prefer to have graduated from a doctoral program that continues to thrive and keeps its current reputation as an outstanding training program. If this program closes, I will be placed in the unfortunate position of defending my degree to future employers, colleagues and the like, as I explain that I graduated from a program that the university shut down.

And the explanation would not stop there, as I would be left defending "how ethically sound and academically strong" the program was, how it was not the American Psychological Association (APA) that shut us down, etc., which is what outsiders would immediately believe. This is surely unfair to all the hard-working graduates and remaining students from this program.

And finally, but not least important, I need to point out that closing the clinical psychology program would affect not only current students and alumni, but the Kalamazoo and surrounding regions that it serves clinically through the WMU Psychology Clinic. This wonderful clinic serves close to 200 patients yearly at a reduced fee for services. Those suffering from mental illness are given a chance to receive excellent treatment at a reduced rate, where it's possible they would not have otherwise received the treatment.

In sum, I surely hope that WMU will reconsider the decision to close such a well-recognized and thoroughly sound graduate training program. Please allow my outstanding colleagues to continue to train top-notch scientists, educators, and clinicians, while preserving the worth of the degree I, and numerous others, have already achieved.

Jenifer M. Cullen is the clinical director and a licensed clinical psychologist for the Developmental Disabilities Program at Arbour Fuller Hospital in South Attleboro, Mass.

## **LETTERS TOTHE EDITOR**

Friday, June 2, 2006

### **WMU's program changes surprising**

I was surprised to learn of Western Michigan University's plans to eliminate a large number of valuable and well-established graduate programs.

Although I knew about the shrinking financial support for graduate teaching assistants in the past several years, the steep increases in their tuition and the attempts to diminish the importance of the graduate college and graduate education in general, I was still shocked by the extent of the planned cuts.

It is hard to believe that university priorities should change so fast in such a short time. Unfortunately, the supposed innovations in graduate education seem to be yet another in a series of hastily planned actions decided upon by a few isolated administrators.

The result will probably be a continued fall in enrollments at Western while other universities prosper. I hope Kalamazoo Gazette readers will join me in urging the Board of Trustees not to rubber-stamp every proposal sent its way by a short-sighted administration.

Seidy Florez

Kalamazoo

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sunday, June 4, 2006

### Program closure affects community

The Kalamazoo Gazette reported on May 15 that Western Michigan University projected the number of students affected by proposed cuts in graduate programs to be "about 240 of 4,800." If only this were the case.

In fact, the impact of the proposed closure of the clinical psychology program is far more devastating. Currently, clinical psychology graduate students provide therapy to many people in the community, regardless of insurance or ability to pay. In the past year alone, students have provided treatment to more than 180 community members suffering from depression, paralyzing fears, anxiety issues and other problems.

Faculty and graduate students also provide services to the community through other agencies. The proposed closure of the clinical psychology program will mean loss of sex-offender services, loss of depression-treatment programs in Kalamazoo and Vicksburg Public Schools, and decreased availability of services for children with autistic disorders.

Finally, the program's closure will result in fewer research participation opportunities for community members. In the past year alone, Kalamazoo and area residents have participated in clinical research studies on smoking cessation, use of an innovative therapy for former methamphetamine users, and use of a parent education procedure for struggling families, to name a few examples. This kind of research has the potential to benefit both the individual community members who participate in the research, and the community as a whole, bringing new knowledge and better practices to the mental health field.

Given administrators' stated desires to increase WMU's strength in health care and the sciences, the decision to close the clinical psychology program is puzzling to many people. What is perhaps most puzzling is that administrators believe it is necessary to close a program that benefits so many people in the university community, in the greater community of Kalamazoo, and beyond.

Suzanne Decker

Kalamazoo

## WMU is in serious trouble

Monday, June 5, 2006

By Larry Syndergaard

The Kalamazoo Gazette's account of the meeting announcing changes in graduate programs to be imposed on Western Michigan University was a classic case of getting the information but missing the story.

The real story lay in things like a presentation that, in the same moment, gave the pronouncement and closed off any chance to analyze, digest and respond to it; that reported academic decisions with the rationales for them simply claimed, not demonstrated; that many took as showing contempt for Western's "constitutional" process of review for establishing or giving up academic degrees and programs; and that drew warm applause only for faculty objections. This is not the way a university with real stature works.

A fundamental principle of university education is that creating curriculum -- courses, content and degrees -- is the faculty's responsibility. There was an attempt at the meeting to claim full faculty input. It would not be hard for the Gazette to determine whether the great majority of the faculty find that anything like this has happened.

What you will find instead, among those faculty who dare to speak out, are words like "arbitrary," "private agendas," and "climate of intimidation." In fact, if the Gazette could guarantee absolute anonymity, I suspect you would get similar judgments from a majority of WMU administrators, including chairs of departments and deans.

The story, further, is the connection between this pronouncement, the fatally flawed process that produced it, and the massively negative result in the recent faculty evaluation of the central WMU administration conducted by the faculty senate.

The real story is thus that despite its history, until recently of solid development and adaptation, Western is in serious trouble, and in ways that have little to do with cutbacks in state support. It is rather a matter of institutional governance and spirit.

The faculty is the core of this or any university, and Western retains a remarkably able faculty -- as yet. But as long as so very many are demoralized, or scared or angry, there will be no mobilizing of faculty energy and creativity -- the only way a university thrives. We all remember just how effective "central direction" was for the economy of Russia, and it promises no better for the academic curriculum at Western.

Larry Syndergaard is a professor emeritus in English from Western Michigan University. He resides in Kalamazoo.

## **WMU reasons for program cuts withheld**

Saturday, June 10, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

**[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583**

Spanish department chairman Jorge Febles was hoping to see documents with detailed explanations for cutting the Spanish doctoral degree at Western Michigan University.

What he received Friday was a folder of general statistics -- such as enrollment figures and budget numbers for Spanish and other programs -- plus meeting minutes that were mostly blacked out, with the exception of a few sentences.

He assumes the sentences that are obscured did not relate to the Spanish degree, but there's no way to tell.

"Basically what we got is a whole bunch of documents that we had already, a lot of statements that really mean nothing," Febles said.

There's also no single document or documents that summarize the administration's rationale for cutting certain programs.

"There's not a heck of a lot (here)," he said.

WMU officials announced in May that 21 graduate programs were to be eliminated after a nearly yearlong review of graduate education. Several also will expand or be newly created.

In response to faculty outcry, officials provided no rationale and, initially, no chance to appeal decisions.

President Judith I. Bailey decided to offer an appeals' process and, on Friday, materials the administrators used to decide what programs would be cut were disseminated to department heads planning to make a case to retain their programs.

Representatives from fifteen of the 21 programs have decided to offer appeals, which are due next Wednesday.

In a letter Thursday, Bailey implored departments to note that recommendations announced in May were based on numerous factors, including department materials submitted, recommendations from departments, many meetings and discussions and goals for the review of graduate education.

"Thus," she wrote, "generally there are few extensive comments on each program-closure recommendation."

That doesn't sit well with some chairs of graduate programs on the chopping block who felt much like Febles about documents they'd received from the administration.

“We had no information before, and now we have a little bit, but there are some things in there that, as a department, we find insulting,” said William Kern, chair of the economics department. The department’s doctorate in applied economics is slated for closure.

On the redacted documents they received, Kern said, administrators said the program was “unimaginative” and “unproductive,” had mediocre international students and should be moved to another college within the university.

“We’d like to see more, to see basically how they arrived at those conclusions. ... We hope we’re able to demonstrate that that’s not true to the (appeals committee’s) satisfaction,” he said.

The explanation the Spanish faculty was given last month was that WMU should direct funding from the Spanish doctoral degree to offer more languages.

Febles says that student demand is what developed his Spanish department, and he didn’t find anything in what he received Friday to counter that argument.

One line on a redacted page was particularly stinging to him: “The Spanish department is running a conservative (mediocre) program and wants an entire floor in Sprau Tower where everybody speaks Spanish -- a real imbalance.”

During the initial graduate-education review, Febles said his and other departments were asked to make a case for their program, and they then developed a report with data about their program, including statistics that demonstrated demand, information on competitive programs and an evaluation from an outside expert.

“The thing I’m resentful about is I did not get the same (kind of) document back,” he said.

## **Drop Bailey, bring back WMU track, academics**

Sunday, June 11, 2006

**By Gary Bastien**

This is in support of the great May 31 letter from a Dr. David J. Duchamp complaining about further academic cutbacks at Western Michigan University. He wrote:

“If graduate-degree program changes are to be a positive change for WMU, it is very important that there be a consensus, among faculty, administration, students, prospective students, alumni and the general public that each proposed change is for the greater good of the university and its students.”

He is right on here. You have a new president coming in, not understanding that these programs give recognition to the university and really having no clue about the impact the cuts make or the positive impact the recognition brings when these programs are retained.

The Kalamazoo Gazette published a letter I wrote last year complaining about the very same thing that happened when WMU President Judith I. Bailey cut the men’s nationally (no, internationally) recognized track and field program.

It is mind-boggling to me that WMU continues to put more money into a football program that gets NO national recognition.

But the track team produced nationally ranked athletes, like decathlete Phil McMullen, who at one time was ranked second in the United States and 12th in the world in his field.

Do you realize in the time since Bailey made her cuts, Boaz Cheboiywo, an Eastern Michigan University track runner, appeared on television three times during prime-time Saturday broadcasting on ABC and ESPN sports, and EMU was mentioned at length during the course of his five-minute race no less than 10 times?

And you call track a non-revenue sport?

Is the university system so isolated that we can only hire people like President Bailey who have not really been out in the real world and don't have the marketing savvy to understand this?

Instead, she makes bad decisions to increase what she thinks is a revenue venture by investing in football, while across the state one athlete from a competing school, Boaz, got publicity free of charge for EMU with a very small investment.

I think it is time the taxpayers of the state demand better trustees and administrators who have a more sophisticated understanding of the value of marketing and public relations.

So, go ahead, President Bailey, throw another couple million at football which, by the way, is a non-revenue sport if you look at an income statement.

While you are doing that, EMU continues to get recognition for the school for free and, in the process, increases its reputation, name recognition and alumni donations as our Olympians do good by us.

I say this to wish WMU the best, and that would be to replace President Bailey before she eliminates any more valued academic or athletic programs.

Once she is gone, let's all work together to bring these outstanding institutions back to WMU. I and other EMU tracksters will be the first in line to donate to the WMU track program if the university feels it cannot support it.

Get rid of Bailey and bring back WMU track and save any other valued recognized university programs currently on her chopping block.

Gary Bastien of Saline graduated from Eastern Michigan University in 1981 and was Mid-American Conference champion in the decathlon in 1978 through 1981. He was also an NCAA Division I All-American in 1979 and 1980.

## **WMU's proposed cut of statistics doctorate disrespectful to grads**

Monday, June 12, 2006

**By John E. Daniels**

This letter is being written regarding the recent recommendation by the administration of Western Michigan University to eliminate the Ph.D. in statistics from the curriculum.

I am a third-generation WMU graduate. My grandmother attended Western Normal Teacher's College in the 1920s for two years and taught in a one-room schoolhouse in Allegan County. My mother received her bachelor's degree from WMU in 1960 and taught at Chime Elementary in Oshtemo. I received my Ph.D. in statistics from WMU in 2003 and am an assistant professor in the Mathematics Department at Central Michigan University.

The evolution of my family mirrors the evolution of WMU. Whether teaching in a one-room schoolhouse or on a large campus, WMU has evolved to meet the needs of its students. The evolution has always been progressive, not regressive. When I decided to attend WMU, I was 36 years old, had not been in the classroom for some time, and had worked for both General Motors Corp. and United Technologies Corp. over 18 years. I was a trained engineer and had spent my entire career solving problems that were theoretically correct, but not sustainable.

My decision to enroll at WMU was because the Ph.D. program was a perfect fit for me. In part, that was based on my family legacy, but more importantly based on the program's reputation. The Ph.D. in statistics offered by WMU had a reputation for being applied in its statistical approach and quite practical.

I rejected other graduate programs (at Purdue University and Michigan State University) because they seem to emphasize only theoretical statistics without considering the applications in a real world environment. After 18 years in the private sector, I knew the WMU Ph.D. program had some unique advantages that would not be found anywhere else. Indeed, my dissertation allowed the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to generate public policy guidelines regarding arsenic contamination issues throughout the state.

I don't believe I would have been able to assist our state legislation in this way within a strict theoretical curriculum. The WMU Statistics Department supported my research and certainly distinguished itself in this regard.

Upon graduation, my services to academia were in high demand and I had many job offers to consider. My WMU peers are employed at major research universities, pharmaceutical companies, and other major international corporations. Members of the WMU Statistics Department enjoy an international reputation and I am actively conducting research with them. Without the help and support of the Ph.D. students, such research is just not feasible.

I am distressed that the degree I worked so hard to earn is now given such little value by WMU. There are currently 20 Ph.D. students in the WMU Statistics Department; clearly this is an active and thriving program. Many of the men and women of the Statistics Department have spent their entire careers building up this program; only to see their hard work destroyed by the hands of others.

I would ask the WMU Board of Trustees to consider continuing the Ph.D. in statistics. It is ironic that as this state requires more advanced coursework from its high school students, WMU proposes elimination of a highly valued technology-based degree. To terminate a program of this stature sends the wrong message to the research and corporate communities, is short-sighted and is disrespectful to its graduates.

As of today, I am not a wealthy philanthropist. However, any of my future decisions involving financial support to this institution and continuing my family's legacy at WMU will depend on the wisdom demonstrated during the board's deliberations. I will be watching them with great interest.

As Abraham Lincoln once said, "You do not strengthen the weak by weakening the strong." I would hope the Board of Trustees considers these words when discussing the fate of the Statistics Department.

Thank you for your kind attention.

John E. Daniels of Mount Pleasant is an assistant professor in Central Michigan University's Department of Mathematics.

## **Proposed WMU psychology program cuts have negative impact**

Monday, June 12, 2006

**By Shannon M. Loewy**

I am writing concerning the recent decision by Western Michigan University's provost to eliminate two programs from the Psychology Department. I believe that eliminating these programs from WMU would be an egregious error that would have a huge negative impact on the university as well as the community of southwestern Michigan.

I grew up in Florida and completed my undergraduate degree at Florida State University. I graduated with a 3.98 grade point average and earned a score of 1,300 on the Graduate Records Examination. I was highly recruited by many graduate programs and offered large amounts of funding to attend these programs. WMU was not able to make such an offer, but I chose to do my graduate work here because of the prestigious reputation of the Psychology Department.

For the area in which I chose to specialize, WMU is the absolute premier school to attend. The Industrial/Organizational Psychology master's program at WMU is, in my opinion, a top program for training in the application of evidence-based interventions to improve human performance in business and industry.

The psychology programs here are so superior that I moved from beautiful, sunny Florida to Kalamazoo. I left my family and friends and moved here alone. I turned down obscene amounts of funding from Research I-rated universities. These were all sacrifices I was willing to make to gain the education and training that was offered here through the Psychology Department.

It is a grave disappointment that this opportunity may not be available to students in the future.

It is blatantly obvious from the data collected by the review committee and the recommendations made by this committee that these programs should not be targeted for elimination. The net on-campus revenue (this is calculated

by adding tuition and external awards and subtracting actual expenditures) for the Psychology Department, collectively, is approximately \$2 million annually. Why would a university that is in financial trouble cut a program that is making this kind of money?

The Psychology Department awarded the most doctoral degrees in the entire university between 2000 and 2005. Why would a university that is struggling with enrollment want to cut one of its most successful and efficient programs, especially programs that are drawing high-quality graduate students from other states? After reviewing the data, I must say this decision comes as quite a shock.

I am currently a student in the Industrial/Organizational Psychology master's program. I believe that closing this program would not only have a significant negative impact on WMU, but also on the surrounding community. The students and faculty of this program have developed relationships with many organizations in the community including, but not limited to, Bronson Methodist Hospital, Pfizer Inc., Consumers Energy, Alliance Senior Day Care and the Association for Behavior Analysis. These are businesses that contribute substantially to the community of southwestern Michigan and we continue to support them and help them improve.

Many of these organizations are so pleased with our work that they have begun hiring our graduates! This kind of relationship with local and nationwide businesses is extremely beneficial to WMU and I am baffled that anyone would believe it to be in the school's best interest to sever these ties.

I urge you to inform the citizens of our community of what is going on with this situation. This decision does not only impact the university, but the entire community. Please consider the impact that this decision will have on Western Michigan University, the community of Kalamazoo and southwestern Michigan the field of psychology, and the students.

Shannon Loewy is a graduate student in WMU's Psychology Department.

## **Clinical psychology cut at WMU hits community**

Tuesday, June 13, 2006

**By Jimmy Anderson**

Your paper has been covering the recent developments at Western Michigan University as a result of the decision by the university administration to eliminate a number of graduate programs. One of the largest and most noticeable of the graduate programs slated for elimination is clinical psychology. You have done a nice job describing the general scope of the cuts, but I think that more information is necessary when evaluating this unprecedented event.

The recently resigned provost reported at the meeting during which she announced plans to cut graduate programs that the university "just could not afford" to continue running the clinical psychology program. With the current state of the economy of WMU, Kalamazoo and the state of Michigan, such a claim is certainly worth serious consideration. However, published university data flies in the face of this claim.

In recent years, the psychology department has ranked sixth out of 60 departments in terms of net on-campus revenue. The clinical psychology program has more applicants with higher graduate records exams scores than almost any at the university. No department has awarded more Ph.D.s between 2001 and now than psychology. As if these objective facts aren't enough to make the case for the maintenance of the clinical psychology department, the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (in which the program is housed) recently gave the clinical psychology program the highest possible quality ranking, with the recommendation that it be expanded.

All this aside, the population who would be hurt the most by the loss of the clinical psychology program are not its students, its faculty or the university administrators. The clinical psychology department offers highly professional service and empirically supported mental health care to a wide variety of Kalamazoo residents with a wide variety of problems, including autism, depression, anxiety, stress, issues of aging, marital problems and family relations difficulty, among others. These services are currently available at very low cost, and sometimes free of charge.

If the clinical psychology program is closed, the Psychology Clinic and Center for Autism will also close, and hundreds of children, adults and families in the Kalamazoo community will be forced to live without services or to find them elsewhere. However, financial constraints will likely prohibit most of the people we serve from finding other affordable services.

Tough economic times call for tough decisions and, this time, one of those difficult decisions may be to cut certain programs at the university. However, if you are trying to save a cash-cow, it doesn't make sense to cut off a leg, especially when that leg is supporting a part of the local community very much in need and with few other options to receive help.

Jimmy Anderson resides in Kalamazoo.

## **WMU professors request more documents**

Tuesday, June 13, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

**[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583**

Western Michigan University's faculty union filed at least one Freedom of Information Act request to obtain documents showing why university administration selected certain degrees for elimination.

"We're just trying to get all the possible information we can for the faculty who are having to prepare their arguments for keeping programs open," said Alan Rea, spokesman for Western's chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

The union is awaiting the university's response, Rea said.

After an analysis of graduate education, WMU officials revealed in May that 21 degrees would be discontinued after current students completed their programs. Several degree programs would see additional funding, and plans to create some new degrees were also announced.

But faculty members particularly those who learned their programs would be dropped, wanted to know reasons for the decisions, which initially were not provided.

On Friday -- unrelated to the union's FOIA request -- university officials provided department chairpersons documents that administrators say they used to determine which programs would be retained and cut.

But the reasons for the decisions still are not clear, says statistics department chairman Daniel Mihalko.

"I didn't expect to get very much, but I was hoping to get some kind of logic between their stated goals for the university and the cancellation of the program," Mihalko said Friday after getting documents.

"There are comments, but there aren't any reasons," Mihalko said.

His department's doctorate in statistics is one of the degrees administrators said last month would no longer be offered after current students complete their degrees.

## **WMU clinical psychology doctorate program has national reputation**

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

By **Andrea T. Kozak**

I am writing about the recent decision to potentially eliminate the Ph.D. program in clinical psychology at Western Michigan University. I encourage you to consider the profound negative effect this decision will have on graduates, current students and WMU's solid reputation as an excellent institution for graduate study.

Attending and graduating from WMU's clinical psychology doctoral program has provided me with wonderful opportunities. The final requirement of the training program is to complete a one-year clinical internship. When I applied for internship, I was matched to the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC),

which was my first choice. Since graduating from the clinical psychology program in 2003, I have been working as a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Bonnie Spring, a nationally and internationally-known behavioral medicine researcher. She specializes in the study of unhealthy lifestyle behaviors that lead to chronic disease and premature death. Last year, Dr. Spring moved her laboratory from UIC to the Department of Preventive Medicine at Northwestern University (NU). I was asked to join her at NU and was selected for a postdoctoral fellowship training position in cardiovascular epidemiology and prevention.

Since graduating I have 10 published manuscripts or abstracts and will be submitting additional manuscripts over the summer and fall of this year. I have formed research collaborations with individuals at Hines VA Medical Center and Rush University Medical Center. I am also co-investigator on a \$750,000 research grant recently awarded to Dr. Spring. I am confident that I would not be where I am at today without the valuable education and training from WMU's program. Upon graduation, I had the option to pursue clinical work, research or teaching and I feel that the program trained me well to pursue any of these options.

There are a number of reasons I chose to attend WMU for my Ph.D. First, the clinical psychology Ph.D. program has been accredited by the American Psychological Association since 1991. Attending an accredited program is extremely important in order to secure an accredited internship position and licensure. I am confused about why a program that has had national accreditation for 15 years would be considered for elimination.

Since this competitive program has a national reputation, faculty members are able to interview and select students from all over the nation. Further, graduates have secured postdoctoral fellowships or full-time positions all over the country, providing more exposure to WMU and supporting its reputation as a university with first-class graduate level training.

Second, the program is nationally-known for its very strong behavioral and "scientist-practitioner" orientation. Students are trained in the use of evidence-based treatment, which is the only type of therapy that insurance companies will pay for when individuals seek psychological services. Whether graduates become scientists conducting research, practitioners providing clinical services, or a combination of both, we are taught to embrace empirical evidence.

The goals of the clinical psychology Ph.D. program clearly fit the mission of WMU. If the program is eliminated, this could have serious consequences for new graduates and current students. I suspect that an employer may have doubts about these individuals' qualifications since they are coming from a program that has been terminated.

I am very proud to display my doctoral degree in my office at NU. It would be truly unfortunate if this program is eliminated since it has been beneficial to me; previous and current graduate students; and WMU. I strongly encourage the WMU Board of Trustees not to eliminate the Ph.D. program in clinical psychology.

Andrea T. Kozak of Chicago is a postdoctoral fellow in cardiovascular epidemiology and prevention.

## **Economics doctorate cut ill-advised WMU decision**

Saturday, June 17, 2006

**By Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes**

I am writing to express my shock and dismay at the recent announcement by Western Michigan University's top administrators that the Ph.D. program in the Economics Department was slated for elimination. The ill-advised decision seems to have been based on misinformation and incomplete program review guidelines, and bodes poorly for the future of the College of Arts and Sciences as well as the broader university community.

The economics Ph.D. program at WMU has been in existence for only 12 years. That means that only 12 years ago, the department faculty, college leaders, and upper university administrators determined, after a painstaking program analysis, that the program would be a worthwhile addition to the university's graduate portfolio. How can it be that only 12 years after its inception, the economics Ph.D. program is no longer of sufficient quality to remain in existence?

The program has exceeded its stated goals from 12 years ago and it makes no sense to terminate the program now. Indeed, in its 12 years of existence, the program has produced many fine Ph.D.s who have gone on to teach and research throughout the United States and beyond. The program has gained national stature and its graduates are

well-known throughout the research and teaching community. The program's focus on real world applications of economic theory fills a niche left open by most other economics graduate programs, and produces graduates well-equipped to address questions posed both by policy-makers and businesses.

On a more personal note, I received my Ph.D. from WMU's Economics Department in 1998. Since that time (after a brief post-doctoral), I have been employed in the economics department of San Diego State University, first as an assistant professor, then promoted to associate professor in only four years, and finally, this past year, promoted to full professor. My fast track to full professor of economics can be attributed to many factors, not the least of which being the quality of the economics training I received from WMU.

Despite my professional successes and the success of my many fellow WMU economics graduates with doctoral degrees, all of our professional futures will be damaged by the termination of WMU's economics Ph.D. program. Others will assume that a university surely would not terminate a quality program, so the program must be inadequate. Thus, all degrees from that program will be tainted.

How could the WMU upper administrators make such a decision without a careful, thoughtful and open review of all relevant program criteria? Were such a review to take place, the economics program would fare well, just as it did only 12 years ago. All I am asking is for the university decision-makers to reconsider the graduate program cuts with a clear vision for the future and a focus on maintaining WMU's quality standing as a teaching and research university.

Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes is a professor of economics at San Diego State University.

## **WMU dedicated to students despite different perspectives**

Monday, June 19, 2006

**By Judith I. Bailey and Mary Lagerwey**

One of the great things about a university environment is that it fosters open and frank dialogue on those things valued most highly. While most of these discussions take place in classrooms, forums, committee meetings and collegial conversations, a reader of the Kalamazoo Gazette cannot help but notice that over the past few weeks, discussions about Western Michigan University have also been unusually public. Differences of opinion have engaged faculty and members of the community in news stories, letters to the Gazette editor and viewpoints. We believe that these discussions are healthy and a sign of a robust organization.

In many ways, the letters and viewpoints are powerful testaments to the vibrant academic environment of WMU and the level of concern felt for the university. Current and former students and faculty have written passionately and eloquently about the programs and institution they love. Scholars from other institutions and community members have written in praise of our programs. Community members have called attention to the contributions that WMU makes far beyond its walls and the vested interest Kalamazoo has in its future.

In the midst of the issues being debated, it should be understood that the faculty and administration at WMU are resolved and committed to providing the best possible education to our students and to being a valued member of the Kalamazoo community. Those of us who spend our workdays at the university know that while we may have intense differences of opinion, we have one goal -- a sound and vibrant university.

On behalf of the administration and the Faculty Senate of Western Michigan University, we affirm and pledge our commitment to strengthen the university for our students and our community, to listen, and to engage in continued dialogue and shared governance. At the heart of our work, we must maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect. We have differences in perspective and engage in heated debates, but at the end of the day, we share a dedication to and passion for our university and its students.

Judith I. Bailey is president of Western Michigan University. Mary Lagerwey is president of WMU's Faculty Senate.

## **WMU psychology department cuts a poor decision**

Sunday, June 25, 2006

**By Leslie Wilk Braksick**

I am writing to share my shock and dismay at the decision of Western Michigan University's President Judith I. Bailey and former Provost Linda Delene to propose elimination of the master's degree program in industrial/organizational psychology. I cannot imagine the criteria applied that would have led to such a poor decision.

Behaviorally based I/O psychology is "on trend." It is a hot area and has been for the past decade. Behaviorally based leadership has been mandated by several arms of the federal government (NASA alone spent \$3 million in 2005 to train its leaders in behaviorally-based leadership tools and principles) and we expect this trend to increase. More important, behaviorally based leadership approaches are being used by corporate executives worldwide.

Be clear: Western Michigan University has always been the very best training program in the country for learning applied behavior analysis for application in organizational settings. No other program even comes close.

I offer two perspectives on this issue: first as a graduate of the program (M.A. in I/O psychology 1987 and Ph.D. program in applied behavior analysis 1990), and more importantly, as the co-founder and chairman of the largest behavior-based consulting firm in the world, CLG Inc., which depends routinely on graduates with behavioral I/O backgrounds to make measurable impacts on some of the nation's most respected companies -- whom we are proud to call our clients: Chevron, Bechtel, CIGNA, H.J. Heinz Company, Shearing Plough, Canadian National Rail and others.

CLG, founded in 1993, operates around the globe with more than 150 behaviorally based consultants, two dozen of whom hold degrees in psychology from WMU. Our chief operating officer is a graduate of the I/O curriculum at WMU. Some of our best consultants are WMU grads. We could not have the impact we are having on the business world without the behaviorally trained graduates from Western Michigan University.

I/O Programs and courses around the country are growing by leaps and bounds. I receive no fewer than three job postings a month for executive-level, corporate positions that require graduate training in industrial or organizational psychology. Prior to about five years ago, I might receive about one a month. Now, they simply can't find enough qualified individuals to fill the need.

I am an adjunct faculty member at West Virginia University because of its high demand for students interested in behaviorally-based leadership industrial/organizational psychology. I am an invited instructor in the MBA programs at: Carnegie Mellon, Chatham College, Robert Morris University, Westminster College and Stanford University, as they attempt to respond to the strong interest/demand for understanding behavior and leadership from a behavioral perspective.

I have been asked by my publisher, McGraw Hill, to update my book, "Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits" (2000) because of the increased sales and demand they are receiving for the book and in the area of behavior-based leadership, in general. An updated version will be in print early in 2007.

And this is the program that President Bailey and former Provost Delene chose to eliminate? What are they thinking?

The residents of Kalamazoo have many gems at Western Michigan University. I hope they realize that one of them, which draws adults young and old from all over the nation (including this author, originally from Upstate New York) is its graduate program in industrial/organizational psychology. The corporate world knows of Kalamazoo, in part, because graduates from this program have gone into their companies and made important differences in their performance and on their culture.

If the cutting of graduate programs is necessary, I suggest choosing ones that suffer from low enrollment, inadequate faculty, weak future/job market, etc., not the one that continues to bring recognition and prominence to both the university -- and to Kalamazoo.

Leslie Wilk Braksick resides in Pittsburgh, Pa.

## **WMU clinical psychology cut would hurt community**

Monday, June 26, 2006

**By Tara L. Cornelius**

I am writing in reference to the recent decision by Western Michigan University administrators to propose elimination of the clinical psychology doctoral program.

In examining the criteria utilized for WMU's Graduate Program Review, the clinical psychology doctoral program consistently exceeded those benchmarks and it is unclear why, then, this program would be targeted for elimination. As a recent graduate from this program, I am extremely disappointed and frankly bewildered by this decision for many reasons, some of which are outlined below. I strongly urge the greater Southwest Michigan community to rally against such a change that would have a widespread negative impact, and petition the Board of Trustees to reject the proposal by WMU President Judith I. Bailey and others.

First, the elimination of this program is inconsistent with the stated vision, articulated by President Bailey, of the future of Western Michigan University. In evaluating graduate training programs at WMU, President Bailey stated that her goals included increasing the university's focus on "sciences, engineering, education and health care." The clinical psychology doctoral program is an empirical, scientifically focused program which trains researchers and clinicians, many of whom eventually are employed by premiere health care and educational institutions.

In fact, the clinical psychology program has an established reputation among psychologists and in national and international professional organizations as a scientifically based training program, and is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association, a further testament to its academic and scientific rigor. Therefore, the decision to eliminate this program is contrary to the stated vision of the university.

Second, this program trains exceptional practitioners in empirically supported, state-of-the-art treatments for mentally ill children and adults. As we are all aware, mental health issues, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, autism, ADHD, panic disorder, and many other conditions are increasingly affecting members of our society. Graduates of this program are trained in techniques to treat these and other psychological conditions with interventions that have been identified by the American Psychological Association as effective.

Additionally, during their graduate training at WMU, students provide supervised treatment to the traditionally underserved mentally ill. The graduate mental health clinic serves approximately 200 clients annually at reduced or no-cost rates, therefore providing treatment to the economically deprived or uninsured, many of whom otherwise would not be able to afford services. Closing the clinical psychology program would have a profound negative impact on the community, since these skilled clinicians would not be available during graduate school or afterward in mental health employment settings.

Related to the above point, President Bailey stated that she seeks to foster graduate programs that will "position WMU to meet Michigan's needs in the coming years and address national developments." Given the trends in mental health treatment toward empirically validated and scientific interventions, the clinical psychology doctoral program is clearly in high demand, and certainly oriented toward serving the needs of the Michigan and national community. This program, because it trains individuals in treatments that are effective and particularly palatable to third-party payers, is particularly equipped to thrive now and in the future.

Third, the clinical psychology program is well-respected and is a magnet school for talented students who are interested in behavioral psychology. This program is one of a few in the country that is nationally recognized as providing exceptional training in behavioral approaches to clinical treatment, an approach to psychology that is consistent with the national and worldwide movement to train individuals in empirically derived best treatment practices. WMU is distinguished from other programs in clinical psychology in its behavioral focus, and has prestige within professional psychological organizations for this approach. This focus on identifiable clinical goals, overt behavior and thoughts in the treatment of mental health issues is truly, I believe, the future of psychological interventions, and the loss of this program would be a detriment to the immediate community and the discipline of psychology.

Additionally, this program attracts more than 100 students annually for enrollment in its five openings, and the average grade point averages and standardized test scores of those admitted to the program exceed national averages. This program graduates, on average, four talented new clinical psychologists every year, many of whom are employed at premiere research, academic, and medical facilities, including DeVos Children's Hospital, C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, University of Michigan Health Services, Eastern Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, and Gonzaga University, to name a few. It is unclear why this program, which attracts and graduates high-quality professionals with high employability, would be targeted for elimination.

Finally, to address an issue that is sadly often a focal point for those in positions to make decisions, the clinical psychology doctoral program is fiscally successful and viable. Faculty and students seek and obtain significant external grant money, and closing this program would result in a loss of more than \$250,000 annually in grant money alone. Graduate instruction of undergraduate courses results in an annual revenue to the university of more than \$2.5 million.

The revenue generated by the clinical psychology doctoral program is far greater than the costs associated with this program, making it an asset rather than a liability. In a time in which universities are increasingly concerned with the "bottom line," elimination of this program would be fiscally detrimental. While I certainly do not believe that fiscal concerns should be a primary determinate, I recognize that administrators must consider the financial aspects of decisions at this level. From this perspective alone, closure of this program is unwarranted and fiscally irresponsible.

I am a proud graduate of the clinical psychology program at WMU, and am disappointed and dismayed at what appears to be a misinformed and misguided decision to close this invaluable program. Elimination of this program would be a detriment to Western Michigan University, the greater Southwest Michigan community, and the numerous research, academic and medical facilities that employ, and seek out, graduates of this program. I implore the readership of this paper to insist that the Board of Trustees and President Bailey reconsider this decision in light of the broad-sweeping negative consequences that would result from closing this program.

Tara L. Cornelius is an assistant professor of psychology at Grand Valley State University.

## Professors Appeal Cuts To Graduate Programs

June 26, 2006

KALAMAZOO — Twenty two graduate programs are on the chopping block at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. A lot of students and teachers there are upset, doing what they can to keep the degrees right where they are.

A University spokesperson said they initially decided to cut the programs after a long review process to realign the University for the 21st Century and meet demands. They want to focus more on science, engineering, education and health care. That has caused more than a dozen departments to appeal their decision.

"We were shocked, dismayed and now a little angry," said psychology student Doug Johnson. He's one of close to 900 people from WMU and across the country, who have signed an online petition, not to eliminate the clinical psychology and industrial operational psychology graduate departments at the University.

"Mental health I think is important," said Johnson. "If the University is claiming to want to improve health science, you'd like to think psychology is one of the most important things you want to focus on," he said.

That's the message the chair of the psychology department took with him Monday, when he plead his case to the graduate studies appeals board, in a closed door meeting.

"They're high quality programs, they're in high demand," said Department Chair Wayne Fuqua. "The students get jobs in often very prestigious places and they contribute greatly to the quality of life in the state of Michigan," said Fuqua.

Fuqua said eliminating the programs wouldn't only send high quality students away from the university and out of West Michigan, but it would also eliminate the research and work they do for a number of organizations in the community.

"Everything ranging from Pfizer to Bronson hospital to a variety of other places where they add value to the organization," said Fuqua.

The chair of the appeals board, a professor at the university, said they have tough recommendations to make. Monday's meeting was one of 15 appeals they've heard this month.

"The end game is to give the best advice that we can to the president," said Chair John Jellies.

The appeals board has just over a week to make their final recommendations to the president, weighing what's best

for students and what's best for the university.

"I'm cautiously optimistic that if they are looking carefully at the data, and I have every reason to believe they are, that it will come out very favorably in this review process," said Fuqua.

The president of the university will make her recommendations on what to cut on July 14th. It's then up to the board of trustees to make the final decision. A spokesperson for the university says, they are taking the appeals process very seriously, and will consider all information gathered during this time.

Copyright © 2006, [WXMI-TV, Grand Rapids](#)

## **WMU graduate college should support psychology degree programs**

Tuesday, June 27, 2006

By Thomas G. Szabo

I am writing to express my exasperation and profound disappointment at the letter from Western Michigan University President Judith I. Bailey and the former provost outlining graduate program review recommendations. As a student who traveled from Colorado to attend the most highly respected behavioral psychology department in the United States, I can tell you that my shock and consternation is shared throughout the community of scholars with whom I correspond and who rely upon the scholarship advanced by the faculty and students of this university.

Why is the WMU Psychology Department so important? To understand this, you must recognize that there are precious few behavioral psychology departments in the nation, and fewer still with the proven academic rigor for which the WMU department is so well regarded. Where there are programs in behavior analysis, clinical programs are rarely coordinated to be part of the same collegial community. Industrial psychology programs with a behavior-analytic framework are similarly rare and frequently not set up to be in coordination with clinical and traditional behavior analysis programs.

I came to WMU specifically because of the unique relationships that are fostered between faculty and students. The intellectual cross-pollination that occurs here as a result of the tightly knit relationships across these disciplines has advanced the science of psychology immeasurably, and I wanted to be a part of that community which has been so influential in the field.

I currently participate in the lab of Dr. Linda LeBlanc, who serves as faculty in both the behavior analysis and clinical programs. LeBlanc's unique contributions to the field and to her students are a result of her commitments to both clinical practice and behavior-analytic approaches. If scholars like LeBlanc lose the support to pursue research and practice in these combined areas of expertise, they will either leave or be forced to substantially limit the intellectual contributions they are able to make.

Among those contributions made by LeBlanc and the other faculty in the clinical program are practicum sites such as the Center for Autism, Lakeside Home for Boys and Girls, the Gerontology Assessment Center and Residential Opportunities. These community programs run on the basis of the support they receive from Western Michigan University. The loss of these programs would not only be suffered by the undergraduate and graduate students who gain crucial experiences at these sites, but also by the community of the broader Kalamazoo area making use of these services. Additionally, much fine and influential research, responsible for bringing in substantial grant money, would no longer be feasible.

The clinical program, which has been fully accredited for 15 years, and the premier industrial/organizational program in the United States are assets whose loss would be a tragic loss to the state of Michigan. Nine extremely popular undergraduate courses taught by clinical and I/O students would be virtually impossible for faculty to teach without sacrificing research. These courses and research together constitute significant sources of revenue to the university that would be lost if the programs are closed.

The undergraduate psychology program at WMU, which has more than 900 majors, would be permanently damaged by this loss, and surely enrollment would suffer as popular courses, such as Abnormal Psychology and Child Psychology, are dropped from the program.

The total revenue generated from the clinical and I/O programs exceeds \$7 million annually, not counting grants and contracts; the total cost of faculty, staff and students, fringe-loaded, is only just over \$3 million per year. Clearly these figures suggest that the programs recommended for elimination are viable, healthy economic contributors to the university. Such financially successful, highly competitive and productive programs, which receive the highest levels of support from the international psychological community, should receive ongoing support from the Graduate College of Western Michigan University.

Thomas G. Szabo is a resident of Kalamazoo.

## **WMU should reconsider Spanish degree decision**

Saturday, July 01, 2006

**By Alicia Arribas**

I am writing concerning the unreasonable elimination of the Ph.D. program in Spanish.

This program started in 2003 demonstrating the importance and necessity of Spanish professors all around the country. Two of the most relevant universities in Michigan (the University of Michigan and Michigan State University) have Ph.D. programs in Spanish and Western Michigan University needed one so the great professors that work for the Spanish Department made a lot of efforts to create an extraordinary program. These three years have been very significant for the development of the Spanish program, but it needs more time.

I am from Spain and I did my master's degree at Western between 1999 and 2001. At that moment, there was not a Ph. D. program in Spanish here so I decided to look for a job. The Spanish M.A. is excellent and well known because of the outstanding professors who are always willing and happy to help all the students, both undergraduate and graduate.

For all those reasons, I was well-prepared and was selected for three different jobs, two at different universities and one at a high school. I worked at Grand Valley State University for a year and then decided to go back to Europe where I found a good job as a Spanish instructor in the Netherlands.

However, what I really wanted to do was the Ph.D. in Spanish at Western Michigan University. I worked for another year and a half in Spain to be able to have money to start the Ph.D., as the assistantships are not enough and because I am a foreign student, I cannot work outside the university.

When I arrived in August 2004 I expected to return to the superior department that I knew, but it was even better because more excellent professors had been hired. I moved all the way from Spain to Kalamazoo to be able to study the Ph. D. in WMU's Spanish Department. I left my family and friends there, but I knew I was coming back to a department that was going to give me, professionally and personally, all I needed for my future.

It was a great disappointment when I received the news of the cut of the Ph. D. program.

You can see how well the Spanish Department works. Every year, more and more students are interested in studying Spanish at WMU and some in studying abroad in any of the three programs that the Spanish Department offers. Furthermore, the M.A. and Ph.D. students from different parts of the world do community service in Kalamazoo, visiting schools and presenting their cultures to the children.

Why, then, would a university eliminate a program that is benefiting it and the whole community around it? I do not understand and I would like the university to reconsider that decision.

Alicia Arribas is a Ph.D. student in the WMU Spanish Department.

### **Faculty Senate response powerless**

The June 19 letter about the conflict at Western Michigan University co-authored by the university president and the faculty senate president is a strong reminder for me, as a former faculty member, of the ways in which the Faculty Senate may fail to act in the interest of the faculty. The Senate is a policy-recommending body consisting of elected faculty and appointed administrators. This arrangement gives two bites of the apple to the administration because

they participate in making recommendations and then approving them. In cases of conflict, this is a self-defeating arrangement for the faculty.

Given this governance organization, "any issues being debated" between the Senate and the administration do not take place between equal partners. To demonstrate this, asking "who is doing what to whom?" helps our understanding.

The university president is leading the assault on 25 years of curricular and program development and implementation by the faculty. Yet the Senate leadership participates in a co-authored letter in the Kalamazoo Gazette that states that the university president and the Faculty Senate "have one goal -- a sound and vibrant university."

The Senate leadership cannot build a "vibrant university" by being compliant about program review and elimination without being complicit in the assault. This is a response of the powerless. Right now the faculty interests need to be expressed more strongly than a look-at-how-well-we-can-all-get-along-letter to the newspaper.

When the faculty is a full partner in decision-making at WMU, there are three winners: the faculty, students and the administration.

Lynwood Bartley

Kalamazoo

## **This community doesn't need a university political power play**

Monday, July 03, 2006

**By John P. Flynn and Bridget F. Timmeney**

This is intended to urge the Western Michigan University Board of Trustees and, perhaps, to more completely inform their decision-making concerning WMU's future configuration of programs and associated budgets. This Viewpoint focuses in particular on the graduate program in clinical psychology.

The graduate program in clinical psychology has earned a highly respected spot in local and national public and academic psychology communities. Besides being an outstanding "linchpin" in establishing its place in academia, the graduate program in clinical psychology is frequently one of the university's highly respected public personas.

The department's accomplished staff, graduates and well-prepared and supervised students are a major player and the "lead line" in communicating the institution's availability and viability among other institutions and community organizations.

Costly efforts are expended by universities to bring and keep themselves in the forefront of the nation in certain areas. The Ph.D. Clinical Psychology Department at WMU is an exemplary model of one of these investments.

As news of the board's pending decisions to vastly alter programs and funding is reported, it appears that the board runs the risk of not "economizing." Rather, such a reckless move to do anything less than the present level of funding would be a waste of the "sunk cost" already invested in a program of national renown. Any decision other than maintaining funding at the current level not only sets the program back many, many years; it also is irresponsible stewardship.

The WMU clinical psychology program boasts a strong behavioral science emphasis and specific mission to train students in the development, implementation and evaluation of evidence-based psychological interventions. This mission is consistent with the national and worldwide movement to develop and implement empirically established best practices that are becoming widespread in medicine and related health care disciplines. The research, interventions, and therapies identified and taught through this program continue to be needed and recognized by many professional disciplines across the country and internationally.

The incidence of neurodegenerative diseases is on the rise and researchers are more recently finding that some of the diseases, including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, have psychological components. From personal experience, we

have learned that anywhere from 40 percent to 60 percent of individuals with Parkinson's disease are also confronted concurrently with clinical depression and other associated anxiety disorders.

In fact, Mayo Clinic, clearly by consensus a prestigious institution, routinely recommends interdisciplinary services for these conditions to be concurrently treated by a psychiatrist, a neurologist, and a psychologist. They more specifically recommend that the focus of psychological treatment be with a registered psychologist trained in cognitive behavioral therapy, which is one of the treatment interventions taught in WMU's program.

Mayo Clinic staff at Rochester speak highly of WMU clinical psychology research and highly respected teaching and program graduates. With a finite number of professionals registered with this particular preparation, we know for a fact that in other situations, wherein a team of disciplines are needed to carry out a treatment plan, the availability of cognitive behavioral therapy is required for discharge or continued multidisciplinary services.

Even the Consumer Report's analysis of data on the efficacy of "talk" therapy vs. "drug therapy" finds that the key to success in much of mental health treatment for these conditions points to a combination of the two major approaches, with cognitive behavioral therapy as the treatment of choice.

Other letters published in the Kalamazoo Gazette characterize the board's decision process as being contaminated, limited or based on uninformed data supplied to the board. There are repeated instances of conclusions by administrators, without adequate and essential broader input by the professions and fields represented by the university faculty. Flagrant violations of customary and even contractual decision-making processes have also been mentioned.

At issue now (and always) is what will make WMU a more stable, respected and cost-efficient public institution? Focusing on who wins the political play of power is not what this "community" needs. A key substantive issue is the existing sunk costs already invested in responding to various community needs. The public needs to gain a reasonable return on investment. At the same time, be reminded that the process of decision-making is political in nature, and God willing, substance will outweigh the power of process over need. The best way is to merge the two, process and power, in order to serve those of us who need and/or are paying for the outcome.

If this were a stock, it would be time to buy, not sell.

John P. Flynn is emeritus professor of social work and Bridget F. Timmeney is a resident of Kalamazoo.

### **Psychology programs strengthen university**

I graduated from Western Michigan University with a bachelor's in psychology and a master's in experimental psychology in 1967 and 1968, respectively. I then continued my education at Southern Illinois University, obtaining my Ph.D. in 1971. I have recently retired from Indiana University-South Bend as an emeritus professor of psychology after 36 years.

It was with considerable angst that I have learned that WMU may close the clinical psychology and industrial psychology Ph.D. degree programs offered in the Psychology Department. Without question, these are two of the most unique programs of their kind in the world.

They are unique because they are very rare programs that blend the psychology of B.F. Skinner (the greatest psychologist of the 20th century) with the most useful principles of general and traditional psychology to form the most powerful technology of behavior change. These programs are known, highly respected and greatly admired by professionals and organizations throughout the universe of these respective fields of endeavor.

It is my understanding that these two precious "academic jewels" not only shine brightly from WMU, but they also are strong financial successes. Thus, the Psychology Department's Ph.D. programs in clinical and industrial psychology make strong contributions to the university's coffers and also represent the kinds of strong and unique innovations that bolster WMU's stability, vitality and competitive edge in the academic marketplace.

Speaking as an academic and a practicing psychologist, retaining the Ph.D. programs in clinical and industrial psychology would be a rational and self-strengthening thing for the university, the Psychology Department, and also the national and international communities.

V. Thomas Mawhinney

Emeritus professor of psychology

Indiana University - South Bend

## **Trustees consider changes to public comment rules**

July 6, 2006

KALAMAZOO--Western Michigan University's Board of Trustees is expected to act at the beginning of its next public meeting Friday, July 14, to change the board's public comment rules in a way that will allow members of the University community and local citizens more opportunities to provide input to trustees during the board's formal sessions.

Proposed changes to the board's public comment rules have been developed and will be voted on at the beginning of the board's July 14 meeting. If approved, the new rules will go into effect immediately and would apply to comment at the July 14 formal session and at future public sessions.

In order to allow more individuals the opportunity to speak to the board, individual comments, under the new rules, will be limited to a maximum of three minutes per person. The new rules also specify that the board will hear up to 15 minutes of public comment before the board votes on a discussion action agenda item. Thus, comments from up to five people, each speaking for a maximum of three minutes, will be heard before most votes on discussion action agenda items.

To better process the requests of all individuals who wish to address the Board, those who wish to speak at a formal public session need to register their intent in writing and are encouraged to do so early at the Board of Trustees' office in the Seibert Administration Building. However, public comment request forms may also be filled out on meeting days at the board meeting location prior to the start of the formal public session. The public comment time slots for each action item will be reserved on a first-come, first-registered basis.

The new guidelines also spell out a mechanism for providing written feedback to the board if all public comment slots are taken, and they detail requirements for providing the board with printed material to accompany public comment. A complete draft of the new rules the board is expected to adopt as well as answers to frequently asked questions about the board's proposed amended public comment rules are available at [www.wmich.edu/bot](http://www.wmich.edu/bot).

**Graduate Program Decisions and Recommendations**  
**President Judith Bailey**  
**Western Michigan University**  
**July 7, 2006**

**Dear Colleagues:**

Exactly a year ago, together we began a much-needed review of all of our graduate programs. Today, I am sending to our Board of Trustees a packet of materials outlining the program review recommendations I intend to make when they meet on July 14. I originally planned to announce my recommendations July 12, but because these are such critical issues to those directly involved, I wanted to let you know about them as quickly as possible. The academic futures of many people are dependent on the decisions I will ask the board to make.

As you know, 23 programs were originally slated for closure. Of those 23 programs, 15 programs filed appeals through the appeals process I announced in late May. The members of a truly dedicated appeals committee, to whom we are indebted, reviewed all of the materials collected over the past year as well as new materials prepared for the appeals process. They made their recommendations to me and I have decided to take those recommendations to the board with only a few changes--the most notable of which is my decision to keep two programs open, even though the committee, after much deliberation, recommended closure for both.

#### **Decisions and Recommendations:**

When the Board meets next week, I will share as an information item the following decisions I have made.

Continuation of the doctoral programs in applied economics, clinical psychology, computer science and Spanish.

Continuation with conditions for the doctoral program in statistics, the specialist degree in educational leadership, and the master's degree programs in socio-cultural foundations and industrial/organizational psychology. In addition, the master's programs in elementary school teaching and learning and teaching at the middle school level will be recommended for continuation while the College of Education conducts a planned reorganization and curricular review.

Suspension of the doctoral program in public administration and the Master of Fine Arts degree in art, each to allow time for program reconfiguration and improvement.

I will recommend to the Board that 11 programs be closed. The closure of any program requires a vote by the Board.

The 11 programs I am recommending for closure are doctoral programs in comparative religion and school psychology and a specialist program in school psychology; master's degree programs in applied sociology, art, biostatistics, molecular biotechnology, operations research, teaching of earth science, teaching of geography and teaching of music.

More detailed information on the decision or recommendation for each program is available at <http://www.wmich.edu/president/gpr/>.

**The appeals process:**

The recommendations reduce by half the number of graduate programs originally slated for closure. There was an outpouring of support for some of the programs that have since been removed from the list of programs recommended for closure. Some on campus will conclude that well-organized, letter-writing campaigns were successful. Nothing, in fact, could be further from the truth.

What turned the tide for the programs affected was the work of a fine appeals committee, which conducted its review in a thorough and fair fashion. Where committee members found inconsistencies and errors in data or errors in data interpretation, they dug deeper and built their recommendations around the best information available.

I have spent most of the past seven days reading the program appeals and the committee's assessments and reviewing the data used to support the original decisions. I have met with the deans involved and with Provost Pisaneschi. She and I also met with the appeals committee to hear the views of its members after the completion of their work. My intent was to assess the level of rigor applied at each step in the process and verify the data upon which decisions were based. That review reinforced my confidence in the outcomes and recommendations I am forwarding today.

The appeals committee, chaired by John Jellies, deserves the thanks of every member of the University community. They put in long, difficult days and performed a service of enormous benefit to this institution. Please take a moment to thank the committee members when you see them. In addition to John, the members are: Lee Delisle, Ed Edwards, Bruce Ferrin, Leigh Ford, Mary Lagerway, Bill Liou, Rick O'Hearn, David Reinhold and Gwen Tarbox.

**Next steps:**

There are a number of decisions noted above that require follow-up on the part of program faculty. Individual department chairs, in consultation with their deans, will be responsible for scheduling periodic reviews to assess progress toward meeting the conditions spelled out for continuation or progress toward curricular review for programs suspended.

My sincere hope as we move forward is that this year's review experience reinvigorates our campus commitment to self-assessment and program evaluation. While this University grew quickly over the past 20 years, one critical ingredient that was missing was a system of regularly scheduled program reviews. Having such a system in place would have spared us the tremendous expenditure of time and energy this year's program review required. I will ask the Faculty Senate to begin this fall to develop such a system that will guide us in the future.

I thank each of you for your commitment to the vibrancy of this University and ask for your help in moving forward as a united campus community.

Best regards,

Judi Bailey  
President

## **President announces results of grad program appeals**

July 7, 2006

KALAMAZOO--After a four-week appeals process, Western Michigan University President Judith I. Bailey announced today that she will recommend that the WMU Board of Trustees approve closure of fewer than half the number of programs originally slated to close as the result of a yearlong, campus review of all of the University's graduate programs.

In a message to the campus community, Bailey announced her recommendations, which were based on the results of the review process and the findings of an appeals committee that has been working since the beginning of June to hear the appeals of 15 of 23 programs originally recommended for closure. Bailey said she will recommend that the WMU Board of Trustees approve the closure of 11 programs, including eight programs that chose not to appeal the original decisions as well as three that did appeal. The three are a doctoral program in comparative religion and master's-level programs in art and the teaching of geography.

In addition to recommending closure for those 11 programs, Bailey said, she will report to the board her decisions on 12 other programs, each of which had appealed the earlier closure recommendations. For those 12 programs, her recommendations fall into one of three options: continuation; continuation with conditions; or suspension to allow for time to reconfigure curricula and initiate program improvements.

"What turned the tide for the programs affected was the work of a fine appeals committee, which conducted its review in a thorough, and fair fashion," Bailey said, noting she also conducted her own follow-up review of the material available.

"That review reinforced my confidence in the outcomes and recommendations I am forwarding today," she said.

Bailey's recommendations to the board follows a Graduate Program Review that began last July and was shared with the campus community in the report, "Graduate Education at Western Michigan University: Our First Fifty Years and Strategic Priorities for the Future." The report was introduced at a meeting of the WMU Faculty Senate May 11. The appeals process was initiated by Bailey in late May.

Following the appeals process, the final recommendations on all 23 programs originally slated for closure are as follows:

**Continuation** of the doctoral programs in applied economics, clinical psychology, computer science and Spanish.

**Continuation with conditions imposed** for the doctoral program in statistics, a specialist program in educational leadership and the master's degree programs in socio-cultural foundations and industrial/organizational psychology. In addition, the master's programs in elementary school teaching and learning and teaching at the middle school level will also be recommended for continuation while the College of Education conducts a planned reorganization and curricular review.

**Suspension** of the doctoral program in public administration and the Master of Fine Arts degree in art, to allow each time for program reconfiguration and improvement.

**Closure of 11 programs:** doctoral programs in comparative religion and school psychology and a specialist program in school psychology; master's degree programs in applied sociology, art, biostatistics, molecular biotechnology, operations research, teaching of earth science, teaching of geography and teaching of music.

Students in the programs slated for closure will have the opportunity to complete their degrees. Those in doctoral programs will have up to seven years to finish their studies from the time they began their programs. Students at the master's level will have up to six years from their program start date to complete degrees.

## **Appeals spare WMU grad programs Eight of 11 programs cut didn't appeal to administration**

Saturday, July 08, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583

Some Western Michigan University graduate students had planned to bring signs and make speeches before the Board of Trustees meeting this Friday.

They thought they would have to intensify their campaign to keep a master's degree in industrial and organizational psychology at WMU.

Now they won't have to.

WMU President Judith I. Bailey announced Friday she will spare several graduate degrees put on the chopping block by administration in May.

In fact, most of the departments that appealed degree cuts will see their programs maintained -- some outright and others with conditions.

"I think the facts have always been on our side," said Doug Johnson, a graduate student in psychology, who was celebrating the news with other students Friday.

"It was just a matter of grabbing people's attention and saying this is the effect (of such programs). This is the data. It was hard not to come to the conclusion the program should be continued," he said.

The cuts this spring sparked controversy across campus, resulting in letters to Bailey, the Board and the Kalamazoo Gazette in support of some of the programs slated for elimination.

The university's then-provost, Linda Delene, following a nearly yearlong review of graduate education, ultimately made the decision on which programs would be eliminated. She resigned amid the controversy when the faculty union planned to hold a no-confidence vote in her leadership.

Professors and students in the psychology department were among the most active in contending that based on research productivity, reputation and financial and other factors, their programs -- clinical psychology and industrial/organizational psychology, particularly -- should not have been cut in the first place.

Through an appeals process, Bailey instituted after the outcry, some departments were able to convince either the appeals committee or Bailey to retain their programs, including doctoral degrees in clinical psychology, applied economics, computer science and Spanish.

In at least one instance, Bailey sided with the department and not the appeals committee to maintain a program, though with a condition.

"What turned the tide for the programs affected was the work of a fine appeals committee, which conducted its review in a thorough, and fair fashion," Bailey said in a prepared statement issued Friday afternoon.

"That review reinforced my confidence in the outcomes and recommendations I am forwarding today," the statement said.

Students in the doctoral program for applied economics "were thrilled to hear of the decision," said William Kern, chairman of WMU's economics department.

"We're very pleased, and this is what we hoped would happen. ... I'm pleased to see other programs" maintained as well, he said.

Five other degrees will be retained -- with conditions.

A doctoral degree in statistics, two education degrees and the master's degree in industrial/organizational psychology are in this category.

Earlier this week, Angie Lebbon, a master's student in industrial/organizational psychology heard the appeals committee suggested her degree be merged with another.

"I thought there was no way Bailey was going to save I/O," Lebbon said of her program.

"I was shocked when Bailey came back and said she was going to save us with a condition. You start to feel good about her and the process and her support of students," she said.

The program, which had 11 students this past school year, must grow in enrollment and be reviewed again in 2009.

Some programs -- a doctorate in comparative religion and master's degree program in art -- were not saved despite departments' attempts to fight for their continuation.

Two other programs, a doctorate in public administration and master's degree of fine arts in art, are being suspended, pending reconfiguration and improvement.

The Board of Trustees must OK the program cuts before they are finalized.

## **WMU graduate program cuts finalized**

Saturday, July 15, 2006

By Paula M. Davis

[pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:pdavis@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8583

A review of graduate programs at Western Michigan University that bubbled with controversy this spring came to a close Friday as the WMU Board of Trustees signed off on which programs would indeed be eliminated.

This past spring, administration slated 21 doctorate and master's programs, plus two specialist programs for closure. But some of those decisions caused an uproar, and a formal appeals process ensued.

On Friday, WMU President Judith I. Bailey recommended to the board that 11 graduate programs be discontinued.

Only three of those programs -- a doctoral degree in comparative religion, a Master of Arts degree in teaching geography and a Master of Arts in art -- had submitted appeals to continue.

Formal appeals saved 10 of the programs, including doctoral programs clinical psychology, statistics and Spanish. Two other programs will be suspended so that officials can make improvements.

"The decision, I think, is very sad," Brian Wilson, chairman of the comparative religion department, said of losing the doctoral program.

The department had suspended the degree program a few years ago, hoping to rebuild, but no resources have been forthcoming.

The committee charged with hearing graduate program appeals said the doctoral program didn't have enough students or faculty to continue and decided that proposed changes would be too extensive to implement without starting a whole new program.

Bailey agreed, and the board did too.

The department had not been able to replace retiring faculty, which led to the depleted teaching staff. And there is just one student left pursuing a doctorate.

"We're being judged by the number of students in the program, yet we haven't had the resources to build the number of students in the program. It's a Catch-22," said Wilson, who was not at Friday's board meeting.

The department still has bachelor's and master's programs in comparative religion, however.

"The university as any business has to always review what we do with an eye for productivity and efficiency," Board Trustee Peter Aseritis said at the meeting.

"By making these changes we can have faculty be more productive, more efficient and get a better return for our students for the dollars they invest," he said.

Bailey made clear Friday that it wasn't the campaigning, the letters or impassioned pleas for status quo that influenced decisions to retain certain graduate programs and jettison others.

"I know the (appeals) committee's decision and my own decision to accept nearly all of their recommendations were based on facts and nothing else," Bailey said.

"I was prepared, should the facts take us there, to make unpopular recommendations no matter how many letters to the editor urged me to do otherwise," she said.

## **President Judith Bailey fired WMU changes course Trustees say bad situation got worse in final months of Bailey administration**

Wednesday, August 16, 2006

By Julie Mack

[jmack@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:jmack@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8578

Enrollment is continuing to decline.

Finances remain problematic.

Relationships with the faculty and the community are frayed.

In the end, Judith I. Bailey was fired Tuesday as president of Western Michigan University because the Board of Trustees felt she was failing in three critical areas established as top priorities when Bailey was hired three years ago, board President James Holden said.

"When you look at the hard numbers, we've missed our enrollment targets; we've missed our cost targets," Holden said at a press conference Tuesday. "I see no reason that an institution as great as Western Michigan University should be having problems so dissimilar from other public institutions in the state."

The press conference followed a tense board meeting in which the board voted to dismiss Bailey for breach of contract based on "unsatisfactory performance." The motion for dismissal was supported by five members -- Holden, Sarah DeNooyer, Bill Martin, Ken Miller and Larry Tolbert. Trustees Dennis Archer and Peter Aseritis, both of whom participated in the meeting by conference call, abstained on the vote. Trustee Dan Pero was out of the country.

Archer and Aseritis did join the others in unanimously approving former WMU President Diether Haenicke as the university's interim head.

Bailey made her discontent clear, reading from a two-page statement in which she listed WMU's accomplishments during her tenure, from athletic successes to a 36 percent increase in research funding.

"I believe that Western Michigan University deserves a president who has the skill and commitment to lead the university through this difficult period," she said. "I believe I am that person. There are those who disagree."

"I have a contract with the university. I expect that contract to be honored."

Bailey declined to answer questions after the board meeting.

The board motion immediately ended Bailey's presidency. She'll be paid her salary through the end of the month and provided health care through the end of the year and housing and a car through the end of October. Bailey said after the vote that she plans to serve as a tenured professor at WMU in accordance with her contract.

Holden said he had hoped for a "more gracious" ending to Bailey's presidency, saying he and Martin met with Bailey a week ago to discuss a buyout of her contract. Bailey was offered a year's salary -- \$269,100 -- plus a transitional period of health care, housing and car allowances and vestment in a WMU pension. Holden estimated the value of the package at about \$400,000.

Holden said Bailey wanted the board to fulfill the terms of her current contract, which was extended by one year in December and runs until June 30, 2009. Paying off that contract would have cost WMU more than \$1 million, Holden said.

It became clear Monday, Holden said, that Bailey would not agree to the board's buyout offer. At that point, Holden said, it was clear the board would have to declare that Bailey was in violation of her contract, "the drastic action" he was hoping to avoid.

"I feel what we offered was fair and equitable," Holden said. "I can't recommend to my board that we make this problem go away by paying out a million and change. That's not fair to everyone else at the university who's had to go without raises or make other sacrifices."

The board met in a closed-door session before the vote, without Bailey present. What was scheduled to be a 45-minute meeting lasted almost two hours.

“There was no hesitancy” among the board members, Holden said. “Still, there was a lot of discussion about whether there was a better alternative, a better way. We debated the timing and the dollar amount.”

Although Pero wasn't present and Archer and Aseritis abstained from the vote, he said all three support Bailey's dismissal. He attributed the abstentions to the fact they were not physically present at the meeting.

Although Bailey's contract has been terminated, Holden said, he was still willing to negotiate a settlement with Bailey or her lawyer.

“If she's willing to be more reasonable, we're willing to talk,” he said.

He said he would prefer to avoid a lawsuit.

“I'd rather pay her than the lawyers,” he said.

During the press conference, Holden was asked why Bailey was being dismissed now when she received a positive job review and contract extension just eight months ago.

“There's been a lot of water under the bridge since then in the state and the university,” Holden said.

He pointed to four developments on campus since then:

- Bailey's handling of a plan to reduce the number of graduate programs. The proposal was met with a storm of criticism from students and faculty members who said the process lacked sufficient input from them and that the criteria were unevenly applied.

Bailey ultimately instituted an appeals process, and many of the programs were preserved. But the net result, Holden said, was undergoing a “painful, painful” process, without “delivering on the dollar savings we had hoped.”

- The administration's latest budget, presented to the board in July, tapped into the university's reserve accounts for a second year in a row for a total of \$14 million over the two years.
- Projections of another 5 percent drop in enrollment for 2006-07, even as Bailey made enrollment growth a priority. The university's enrollment has declined from about 29,200 in 2003, the first year of Bailey's administration, to 26,239 last fall.

“We see that as a real problem on the revenue side, and we need to turn that around,” Holden said.

- What Holden described as an “unprecedented” survey conducted in February by the WMU Faculty Senate that indicated the faculty's deep dissatisfaction with Bailey. Eighty-three percent said they lacked confidence in Bailey's ability to lead WMU, and more than 74 percent said Bailey failed to communicate and collaborate effectively. Sixty-five percent said they didn't believe Bailey has “clearly defined and articulated goals” for WMU.

Holden said he understands leaders need to make difficult decisions that leave some people unhappy. But, he said, it's important to have the ability to present decisions in a way that those affected say, “I don't agree, but I understand.”

Miller addressed the issue of Bailey's tense relationship with the faculty and the community. “Despite all the accomplishments she's listed, we still find ourselves in an environment damaging to the community and university,” Miller said.

“I continue to see the effects of this divisiveness on the university community, this town. We need to take some kind of decisive action to turn this tide. ... Support (for Bailey) was never universal from the beginning, and it's become even less so.”

Holden said Western's problems are not solely Bailey's fault but that the university needs to change direction.

“We're not performing to the excellent standards we expect” for the university, Holden said.

“I take no pleasure in this,” he said. “Dr. Bailey has been here during a difficult time and she tried her darnedest to do her best. But the board must take this action now.”