UNO Announces Plan for Academic Revitalization and Restructuring

University of New Orleans President Peter J. Fos announced a plan and process to revitalize and restructure the University's academic programs.

"The vision laid out in our new strategic plan is that UNO will be recognized as one of the preeminent urban research institutions in the nation," Fos said. "In order for us to achieve that goal, we must decide which of our academic programs we will support more fully and which programs we will not."

A working group comprised of the deans of the five academic colleges and the library, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Governance Committee will jointly establish a set of criteria to assess all 84 degree programs. The focus of the group will be to determine which programs best fit the long-term strategic direction of the University as well as those that are a lower strategic priority.

The process will be led by Richard Hansen, interim vice president for academic affairs, and Pamela Jenkins, professor of sociology and president of the Faculty Senate. The working group will make recommendations by Oct. 31 to President Fos, who will submit plans for final actions to the University of Louisiana System Board of
Supervisors. Faculty and students in the affected programs will be notified no later than the beginning of the spring 2015 semester, with potential changes to take effect in the spring 2016 semester.

"The UL System Board and staff stand ready to facilitate UNO's efforts to develop and implement a revitalization and restructuring plan that is well coordinated with a strategic enrollment management plan," said Sandra K. Woodley, president of the University of Louisiana System. "We believe these initiatives are crucial for the future success of the University. The board supports a well thought-out process that is strategic, collaborative, evidence-based and transparent."

The University of Louisiana System has a precise policy and process surrounding discontinuance of programs. UNO will not discontinue a degree program without allowing students to complete that program. The University will allow program or campus transfers if mutually acceptable to the student and the department, provide academic advising assistance to students; and notify students of program closure and timing for phasing out programs.

"Our strategic plan calls for the University to refine our academic offerings in order to achieve financial stability and position ourselves for growth and advancement," Fos said. "I firmly believe this is necessary for the long-term success of the University of New Orleans, and we will work to ensure a thoughtful and transparent process as we refocus our academic resources."