



Faculty Senate Office

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December 5, 2007

Dear URI Deans, Chairpersons and Academic Program Directors:

As you may be aware, the current Academic program review instrument is the Academic Improvement and Investment Model (AIIM) questionnaire. The Academic Program Review Committee is in the process of reviewing and revising the survey instrument prior to a planned re-administration of the survey in the spring of 2008. To assist the updating and revision of the AIIM survey instrument, a letter from the APRC is going to all faculty members asking them to review the AIIM self-study survey instrument and to provide feedback to the APRC prior to December 31, 2007. Copies of the AIIM survey can be found in PDF via a link on the AIIM Homepage: http://www.uri.edu/facsen/AIIM_Home.html. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the following:

- 1) background information about the charge of the APRC;
- 2) a rationale for the development of the AIIM survey instrument;
- 3) instructions on finding and using information contained within the instrument to inform strategic planning.

The APRC is a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and the President and is charged in the University Manual as follows:

5.86.10 *The Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) shall develop and maintain the academic program review instrument. The committee shall coordinate the administration of the review, oversee the collection of data, and compile and disseminate information resulting from the review as outlined in sections 8.86.10-14. When academic program reviews are conducted, the committee shall serve as a resource to departments and programs being reviewed. The committee shall receive and respond to comments regarding the program review process, including, but not limited to, the academic program review instrument.*

The development of the AIIM survey followed many years of urging to replace two prior academic program assessment tools, the Program Contribution Analysis (PCA) that focused upon student-generated income and relative cost of respective programs, and the Program Quality Review (PQR), an extensive review of individual programs that was to be undertaken once every five or six years. In contrast, the AIIM instrument was designed as a tool that would provide a "snapshot" of URI's various academic departments and programs via a self-reporting web-enabled questionnaire to be administered biannually to the faculty. The AIIM would require an estimated 1.5 hours of time for faculty members to complete. After its development, the AIIM was extensively vetted through the various colleges and departments, and presented in a number of university-wide open forums. It was first administered during the fall semester of 2005. The survey consisted of 170 semi-quantitative questions to faculty

members aimed at determining their department's level of contribution in the following areas: teaching, research, finances (both teaching & research), outreach activities, faculty awards and recognition, adequacy of facilities, labs, equipment, studios, etc..., and many other quality and success metrics. The survey questions were derived from common values expressed in the Mission Statement (see: <http://www.uri.edu/home/about/mission.html>). Heaviest value factor weighting is with the core mission elements of teaching, research and other academic scholarship. Financial contributions stemming from student-derived tuition dollars and research-derived grant funds are weighted equally in the AIIM. The survey questions and their weighting factors were modified extensively by the *ad hoc* AIIM Committee after thorough vetting among many URI academic constituencies and, finally, approved by the Faculty Senate, Provost and President.

One initial major concern about the AIIM was that it was a one-size-fits-all tool, trying to adequately describe a broad range of disciplines, programs and departments within the University Academic Community, some of which have unique missions within the broader University Mission. To address this concern, the team who constructed the AIIM questions was careful to include diverse contributions to University life, and to include creative contributions along with other kinds of research and scholarship. No department or program at URI has ever been expected to achieve 100% perfection in the AIIM survey, given the broad mission requirements of the University as a whole, and the specific missions of the various departments. During the 2005 administration of the AIIM, many departments used the opportunity to answer the questions as a means to get to know their own department and colleagues' activities better through generation of discussion at faculty meetings about what colleagues were doing, and how various departmental activities could be done better or more productively. We hope future administrations of the survey can continue to serve this important purpose, and we would hope that you would encourage your faculty to prepare for the AIIM survey by discussion of its questions at their department meetings.

After the fall 2005 administration of the AIIM survey, department chairs and deans were provided access to the results of their respective departments or colleges. The 2005 AIIM survey results are online at the AIIM website operated by Thomas J. Murphy and Associates (www.thomasjmurphy.com). Use the logon code 'notation' and the password '1274' in both cases without quotes to gain access. Our goal with protected access to the AIIM data is to provide as much transparency as possible to intramural users while limiting access to the general public, so we ask that AIIM data be treated as sensitive information.

Once you have logged on to the Murphy website, you may view the individual department or program results by clicking on any of the 'bubbles' on the chart that represent individual departments or programs. Value and Success scores on the 'front page' and subordinate pages of the Murphy website are simply the raw score percentages in each of the Value and Success modules of the survey instrument. The area of the bubble for each department is proportional to the size of the departmental budget as supplied by the Provost's Office. The numerical value for each departmental budget is presented in the header of each departmental summary analysis. The AIIM analysis of each department also includes a pyramid scoring in the broad categories of Value and Success based on the score weightings. The score weightings are presented numerically on the multi-colored pyramids on the Murphy website and they are also presented numerically on the AIIM survey instrument itself. There is also a SGOR (Strengths, Gaps, Opportunities, and Risks) analysis for each department. The SGOR analysis is presented as a series of Value or Success attributes for each department accompanied by plusses or minuses representing a simple numerical deviation in the mean departmental response from a University-wide mean in each of the categories. And finally, the Murphy website provides a summary of identity protected responses from individual faculty members in the department. The numbers and percentages of faculty respondents from each department can be determined, and the level of agreement among faculty members can be examined as crude qualitative indicators of data validity and departmental consensus.

It is important to realize that the AIIM data presentation on the Thomas Murphy website is a condensed data summary of all the AIIM survey results. More detailed information about departments can be obtained by 'drilling down' into raw data not directly available on the Murphy website. For instance, the financial contribution of the various departments to the University through tuition dollars, grant funds and overhead dollars as provided by the Office of the Provost and the Research office are used as input data for the AIIM. These rank ordered quantitative financial data (similar to the old PCA) are provided at the URI AIIM website: http://www.uri.edu/pspd/planserv/facultyinfo/Departmental_Daall_2005_v4.pdf Detailed spreadsheets containing identity-protected faculty responses to each of the 170 survey questions have been provided to the Office of the Provost and can be made available to those interested in greater data detail than the Murphy website provides. Our aim is to maximize the transparency of the AIIM survey, data analysis and its utilization for strategic planning.

The members of the APRC (Prof. Marilyn Barbour, Pharmacy Practice; Prof. Laura Beauvais, College of Business Administration; Dean Winifred Brownell, A&S; Prof. Stephan Grilli, Ocean Engineering; Asst. Provost Cliff Katz; Prof. Celest Martin, College Writing Program; Ms. Ann Morrissey, PSPD; Vice Provost Lynn Pasquerella; Prof. Michael Rice, Fisheries, Animal & Veterinary Science; and Prof. Susan Roush, Physical Therapy) are eager to assist you. Any of the APRC members would be willing to answer questions that you might have about the AIIM survey or direct you to a person in a better position to answer your questions or concerns. Any feedback or suggestions to improve the AIIM questionnaire can be directed to any APRC member or e-mailed to me at rice@uri.edu.

Cordially,

Michael A. Rice, Chairman
Academic Program Review Committee