Senate Resolution on IPAD

1) Whereas, the IPAD process was developed by an administrative committee with limited faculty involvement and was presented to the Faculty in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, without provision for modification and outside the framework of shared governance;

Whereas, the IPAD process concerns matters of curriculum, academic policy, and faculty productivity in scholarship and teaching that are fully within the purview of the faculty as defined in the Faculty Guide;

Whereas the IPAD process was implemented without a vote of the Faculty Senate; and

Whereas, the Faculty Senate voiced numerous concerns about the IPAD process, which have not been addressed, and requested a pause in the implementation of IPAD, which was rejected;

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate affirms its disapproval of the IPAD process and calls upon the Provost to engage collaboratively with the faculty in a rethinking, not merely of the details of the current process, but of the underlying assumptions and premises at the root of the undertaking.

2) Whereas, IPAD is based on the premise that the health and viability of an academic program can be reduced to a numerical score, which can in turn be used to trigger a process of expedited program review; and

Whereas, the IPAD process seeks, in effect, to replace the informed judgment of Faculty Members, Program Directors, Department Chairs, Associate Deans and Deans with an automated process based on a uniform and inflexible set of criteria. As such, it shows both a lack of trust, and a failure to hold administrators responsible for the programs under their direction.

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate specifically rejects the "triggering" component of IPAD. Decisions as to which programs (if any) are troubled and require expedited program review should be made in a holistic manner by Deans, Department Chairs, Program Directors, and Faculty Members – individuals with direct knowledge of the mission, objectives, strengths, and weaknesses of programs – and ratified by College governance bodies.

3) Whereas it is understood that the Provost's office will continue to keep accounts related to the costs of running programs, the revenues generated, enrollments, retention, and other indicators;

Whereas, a variety of methodologies exist for calculating these indicators, and the choice of methodology reflects institutional priorities and can have a significant impact on conclusions;

Whereas, the value and performance of academic programs are reflected in a wide range of qualitative and quantitative sources such as annual reports, academic programming, alumni engagement and career trajectories, community engagement, social media presence, etc.; and

Whereas, transparency and access to the full range of relevant data and their contexts are essential to evaluating the success of programs;

Be it resolved that all information relevant to the evaluation of programs be shared freely with all parties involved in such evaluation and taken into full consideration. In addition, methodology used in generating data on costs, revenues, and other indicators must be fully explained and presented along with the data.

4) Whereas, the ultimate goal of assessment and review should be the revitalization and positive development of academic programs and curricula; reduction of "program inventory" should never be an end in itself;

Whereas, under the APSA processes, targeted programs were not given the opportunity to dispute alleged deficiencies, and some were not allowed to implement changes before the decision was made on suspension;

Whereas, the term "suspension" does not appear in the Faculty Guide in reference to Academic Programs: its current use as the functional equivalent of termination appears to be a means to circumvent the involvement of faculty in the elimination of programs as required under FG 3.10.a.1.

Whereas, the requirements imposed on "triggered" programs under IPAD and APSA are burdensome and counterproductive: programs are obliged to divert valuable time and energy away from their immediate priorities in order to complete administrative tasks with little practical value.

Whereas, the operating under threat of termination undermines the stability of programs, erodes faculty morale, diminishes faculty engagement and makes improvement doubly difficult.

Be it resolved that administrative intervention in academic programs should be incremental and constructive. Programs should be given ample opportunity to make improvements, and decisions to suspend or terminate programs should not be made until a full faculty-driven program review as stipulated in the Faculty Guide is completed. In decisions regarding the preservation of programs, long-term considerations reflecting our academic mission and our values as a Catholic institution of higher education should be prioritized and placed above fluctuations in revenues and enrollments.

In conclusion, the Faculty Senate rejects the IPAD and APSA processes and invites the Provost to join with the Faculty Senate in considering alternative processes in line with the principles outlined above, developed through the appropriate bodies for creating such policies and practices.