

To: University Faculty Council
From: IPRO Resolution Task Force
Date: 2/9/06

The Task Force reviewed the Undergraduate Studies Committee Resolution. Since that resolution highlights a supposed lack of resources for the IPRO program, the Task Force focused on the issue of resource support. Since the UGSC provided little evidence to support its assertion that the IPRO program is inadequately supported, the Task Force did a short study into the question. The Task Force arrives at the following conclusions:

- (a) It is the Task Force's conclusion that inconsistencies exist with regard to financial support of the program at the College, Academic Unit, and Faculty level. Although there is little hard evidence that the IPRO program has been severely under-funded, the financial support issue cannot be divorced from problems that IPRO program has faced and continues to face. Examples that support and counter the resource argument are cited by faculty and administration. Anecdotes seem to dominate the discussion of resource support of the IPRO program.
- (b) The question of resources directly affects the issue of the quality of the program. Clearly a low quality program results from few resources, and a high quality program needs considerable resources. There is disagreement as to the quality of the IPRO program and whether it would benefit from additional resources.
- (c) There is considerable confusion about the support available for the program. Upper administration is unaware of certain staffing and resource allocation policies. Various IPRO faculty are unaware of the support policies. Various academic units have different conceptions or different policies relating to staffing and resource allocation.
- (d) The level of support for the program has been irregular over the years. At present, with some exceptions, units are compensated \$4K for each IPRO course staffed by instructors (either regular faculty or adjunct faculty) based in that unit. This level of compensation has not been in effect in all past years. This compensation does not appear to be based within a regular academic "2" account. This is undoubtedly a consequence of the special nature of the program in which faculty who teach IPROs are spread across academic units, rather than concentrated within a single unit.
- (e) Although the IPRO program is in theory staffed by faculty from the various IIT academic units, the Task Force heard examples or cases in which some units either discourage or make faculty participation in the program undesirable. Other units encourage participation. There is no coherent university policy to deal with staffing issues.
- (f) It has been suggested that academic units should be compensated for staffing an IPRO at a level adequate to hire an adjunct faculty to teach a single course. That cost varies from unit to unit. Based upon interviews with the academic unit chairs, at the bottom it is about \$4k (humanities and civil engineering) at the top is it is between \$6k and \$10k (biomedical or electrical engineering). An alternative suggestion is that units should be compensated at the level at which assistant professors are compensated for teaching summer courses, or at the level at which units are compensated by outside funding for instructional buy-out of an assistant professor. While varying considerably across units, there are considerably higher levels of compensation.
- (g) There is considerable controversy over whether it is appropriate to directly compensate faculty (either to pocket the money or to use it in support their academic work) for teaching an IPRO as an overload. This is now done in some units, although other units say that such action is improper double dipping or an improper interference with faculty research expectations.

(h) Academic units, colleges, and top university administration provided conflicting information about how the IPRO is managed and delivered. During the preparation of this report, policies and statements seemed to shift, indicating a recognition that historically some aspects of dealing with the special distributed nature of the IPRO program may not have been desirable, or appropriate.

(l) The Task Force recommends that the UFC modify the UGSC motion before sending it on for a vote by the full faculty.

Modification:

Reword the motion as follows:

WHEREAS: General Education presently requires that students take at least six credits of IPRO, defining IPRO as a recognized instructional component of IIT's undergraduate education,

WHEREAS: It is essential that high quality of the IPRO program be maintained, and the funding of the IPRO program is variable, with academic units not consistently compensated for the unique demands of delivering the IPRO courses,

BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) The IPRO program, like all instructional activities at IIT, must be supported by a 2-account budget mechanism.

(b) There must be clear university policy on faculty participation that must be coherent across all academic units. This policy must address the following issues (i) whether faculty may teach IPROs as overloads, (ii) whether faculty are permitted to teach IPROs as part of their regular faculty load, (iii) limits on how the units may use the funds made available to it from the IPRO office.

(c) Compensation to the academic units should be raised to \$8K per course, with appropriate re-evaluation based upon assessments of costs in future years. Such assessments should be consistent, for each academic unit, with normal instructional activities and courses that are delivered by the units.

(d) Faculty oversight of the IPRO program and the suitability of each proposed topic, on a semester basis, to qualify as an IPRO must be determined by a faculty committee with broad membership from the academic units. This faculty committee should be appointed annually by the UFC, in consultation with the UGSC.

(e) Due to the non-traditional nature of the IPRO program annual review of the program to examine the issues of financial support and academic quality should be performed at the end of each academic year by a subgroup of the UGSC, and a report made to the UFC prior to the beginning of each academic year.