

Low-enrolled program Management Plan (LMP) Indiana University South Bend

The goal for the LMP is to create a systematic, multi-year process to address the number of low-enrolled undergraduate degree programs by August 2026 through evaluation, innovation, and transformation. Maximizing program enrollments and efficiencies will ensure IU South Bend (IUSB) has a student-focused academic program portfolio and, by being responsible stewards of both state and tuition funding, the resources essential to meet community needs. Once this plan is complete, IUSB will transition to an annual program viability review process, managed by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (EVCAA) and Deans, as well as through regular program review to assess and address enrollment concerns. The LMP is focused on undergraduate majors; low enrolled minors and certificates will continue to be monitored and addressed as needed, but separately and under the purview of each Dean with support from EVCAA.

Part 1: Selecting Programs for the LMP Process – Fall 2024 and Fall 2025

Programs for Consideration: For this process, the EVCAA established a threshold of undergraduate programs with student enrollments below 40 students. This number sets a baseline for identifying programs that will be *considered* for this process.

- *Why 40?* When 40 is divided across a typical four-year program, there would be an average of 10 students per cohort (i.e., first year, sophomore, etc.). With undergraduate course enrollment minimums as high as 15, one could say 60 would be a more logical threshold. However, courses could have other students enrolled (e.g., those completing General Education requirements, minor requirements, requirements for other programs, etc.) and some programs utilize courses that bridge cohorts (e.g., sophomores, juniors, and seniors all taking an elective course for their major simultaneously) which allows for a lower threshold.
- Programs that differ from the “typical” four-year program (i.e., shorter or longer degree requirement completion timelines) will be discussed with the Deans to determine if a different threshold other than 40 should be utilized for consideration in this process.
- *Note: The campus may choose to retain some programs that are currently under 40 students as discussed below in the “Process for Selection” section. However, we must reduce the quantity of programs running at these lower enrollments.*

Additional criteria will be used to select no more than 10 programs per year for review from the initial list of programs identified based on the threshold specified above. These additional criteria include, but are not limited to (flexibility provided to account for the dynamic nature of higher education):

- *Enrollment Trends* – Analysis of whether enrollment numbers are declining, stable, or improving in the last five years.
- *Graduation Rates* – Examination of the number of students graduating from the program annually over the last five years.
- *Program Costs* – Evaluation of the financial viability of the program, including credits generated per teaching FTE and operational costs.
- *Strategic Importance* – Consideration of the program’s alignment with the university’s mission and strategic goals, including its contributions to the community and interdisciplinary integration.
- *Collaborative Potential* – Review of opportunities for collaboration with other campuses within IU and our region in ways that would benefit the campus and/or community.

- *Service* – Attention to the synergies and reliance of other campus programs on the courses within the major (e.g., general education) evident by student course enrollments.
- *Program Achievement* – Reflection on the many elements that highlight quality within a program such as student retention and completion rates, the reputation of the program, scholarly and creative productivity of both faculty and students, etc.

Process for Selection: Early in fall 2024 & again in fall 2025, these steps will be followed to select no more than 10 programs total across the campus based on the criteria outlined above:

- Data updated after census, including five years of both fall enrollments and yearly total graduates.¹
- Should the initial list of programs for consideration be too large, the EVCAA and Deans will select a lower enrollment threshold (e.g., 20 students enrolled) to focus the list prior to pursuing input.
- Data for the list of programs under consideration will be shared with Senate Executive Committee, the Chairs/Leadership Councils from each school, as well as the specific unit faculty from those programs; at least two weeks will be provided for their review and input based on the criteria listed above.
 - Programs not selected for consideration in a given year are encouraged to proactively address their enrollment.
- Data & input reviewed by Deans, School Leaders, & EVCAA.
- Using criteria outlined above & input received, programs to participate are finalized by EVCAA after Chancellor review.
- For transparency both within the campus and in IU, a comprehensive list of all programs reviewed will be shared with the campus including the justification (using the above criteria) for inclusion or exclusion from the LMP process at this time.

Part 2: Participating in the LMP Process

Programs identified in Fall 2024 or Fall 2025 will follow the process outlined below to develop a strategy, create a plan, implement their plan, and assess progress to address their enrollments.

High-level Strategy: Programs identified to go through the LMP process are required to develop a plan to pursue a high-level strategy (or approach) from this list:

1. Develop as a concentration/track within a broader major
2. Develop collaborative efficiencies (e.g., sharing faculty and/or courses with other campuses)
3. Join existing online degree program or develop new online degree program and sunset in-person degree program
4. Significantly revise, restructure, reframe the curriculum in ways that will draw new enrollment and/or increase retention when the major already attracts new enrollment but does not retain them
5. Another solution not specifically outlined here, if proposed in writing and approved by the Dean, EVCAA, and Chancellor
6. Sunset (after suspending new enrollment and teaching-out existing students)

Resources will be provided for those with programs identified for this process, as well as open to those programs who chose to take advantage. Resources provided will vary based on the proposed approach, the needs of the unit, and availability of campus resources. The requests could include, but are not

¹ Programs fully subsumed within other programs (e.g., all B.A. Biology requirements are present in B.S. Biology) will have enrollment and graduate data combined and presented as a single data point (i.e., BS & BA Biology total enrollments).

limited to, consultant support, professional development for faculty, reassigned time to complete needed assessments or revisions, K-12 pipeline development, etc. Resources should be requested in writing to the Dean when a need is identified. The Dean will work with the EVCAA on resource allocation as appropriate.

Reminders:

- Ending a program does not imply that the academic field related to it is no longer available on campus.
- Tenured/Tenure-probationary faculty appointments can only be terminated according to IU and IUSB policies including the Financial Exigency policies. If programs are sunset, faculty workload will be adjusted to cover other academic needs (e.g., teaching service courses, general education courses, minors, tracks, administrative tasks, etc.) based on faculty qualifications and campus needs.
- Faculty in long-term appointments will be notified of position changes per the IUSB Reorganization, Elimination, and Merger (REM) policy.

Timeline: Program faculty will have most of an academic year for plan development, though implementation timelines may vary. Additionally, planned timelines must be flexible to allow for unexpected delays or unforeseen roadblocks in curriculum approvals that are beyond the control of the program faculty.

While it is acknowledged that work of this scope may need to be coordinated by either an individual faculty member or small cohort of faculty from within the program, all program faculty must be provided opportunities for involvement throughout this process and those managing the process must document how and when faculty were involved.

- During Year 1 – Plan development:
 - Faculty charged with exploring & selecting a high-level strategy from the list above, which will then be developed into a detailed plan, including timeline for implementation and evidence-based estimates for impact to enrollment/completion. See *Plan Expectations* section below for further details on plan content.
 - Regular check-ins should be scheduled between the faculty, Deans, and EVCAA. These meetings must include a summary of how program faculty have been involved in the plan development process since the last meeting.
 - Faculty should present an outline of the proposed plan to all School Leaders across both colleges when approximately 50-75% through plan development. School leaders and program faculty will use this opportunity to identify potential impact to dependent programs and provide information on potential negative consequences of the plan, as well as to initiate collaboration with appropriate units.
 - At the end of year 1, the Program Representative (e.g., chair, program director, or person leading plan development) with the Dean and/or School Leader will present plan to the EVCAA and Chancellor for acceptance. If a plan is not accepted, the program faculty will have the opportunity to revise the plan based on feedback by a reasonable deadline. Should revisions to the plan not address the viability of the plan, then the REM process may be initiated.
- During Years 2 & 3 – Implementation:
 - Ideally, plans will either be fully implemented or include components that can be implemented within one year of plan approval and have a demonstrable short-term positive impact. All plan components should be implemented within two years of plan approval.
 - Dean is responsible for tracking and supporting implementation efforts.

- Faculty to submit summary of *implementation actions* about a month after completion; at a minimum, this should summarize when actions were completed and when the changes went (or will go) into effect.
- Additional check-in meetings may be scheduled between the program faculty, Deans, and EVCAA as requested by any stakeholder to update on progress and/or to address unexpected challenges.
- End of Year 4 – Assessment:
 - Dean coordinates with campus Institutional Analytics (IA) to gather updated enrollment, trend, & completion data.
 - Faculty may share additional data about the impact to the program, students, enrollments, other synergies on or off campus, etc.
 - Depending on the implementation timeline, year 4 may be a preliminary assessment with additional time allotted for further review. An alternate assessment timeline (if needed) should be discussed with the Dean during plan development and should be included in the plan proposed for approval.
 - Should unexpected delays occur during implementation, the Dean & faculty may propose revisions to assessment timelines for EVCAA and Chancellor approval.
 - Faculty, Dean, and EVCAA will meet to review and discuss the assessment data compared to anticipated outcomes, as well as next steps.
 - If enrollment, graduation, and/or section enrollment rates do not improve as anticipated, program faculty, Dean, EVCAA, and Chancellor will revisit the question of the program's sustainability.



Plan Expectations:

Feasible innovations/revisions should be developed in consultation with the Dean and must include the following components:

- Clear explanation of the current issues and barriers to success, including an analysis of enrollment, retention, and graduation trends and causes for these trends. This analysis should form the basis of further recommendations.
- Clear description of the proposed innovation(s)/revision(s) that the unit believes will positively impact the program's enrollment, retention, completions, appeal, and/or relevance to students.
 - Evidence and data must be utilized and presented to support the potential impact of the proposed innovations/revisions.
- The anticipated resources needed to execute each innovation/revision, including faculty workload (i.e., reassigned time), staff workload (i.e., reallocation of time from other responsibilities), and/or budget.
 - As we are currently still managing a budgetary structural deficit, any requests requiring increased base budget funding will receive additional evaluation from the Dean, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance (VCAF), EVCAA, and Chancellor before being accepted as part of a plan.

- An analysis/estimation of the return on investment for each proposed change, including proposed metrics for measuring success.
 - The Dean will work with the unit to estimate a potential return on investment for the proposed innovations/revisions, particularly to assess the practicality of any resources requested (time or money).
 - Given that the campus has limited resources, preference will be given to proposals that demonstrate the greatest potential for impact to enrollments/completions with the least overall cost (to workload and budget).
- The *anticipated* timeline for the completing implementation actions and the *anticipated* timeline for when the positive impact of the changes would be measurable in enrollment, resource utilization, or another metric identified by the plan.
 - As stated earlier, depending on the current state of the program (e.g., enrollments, retention, completions, low enrolled sections, etc.) and the complexity of plan, implementation timelines may vary.
 - However, preference will be given to proposals that can either be fully implemented or include components that can be implemented within one year and have a demonstrable short-term positive impact (as described above).
 - All plan components should be implemented within two years of plan approval.

Part 3: Next Steps

After programs are identified in Fall 2024 and Fall 2025, we will rely on regular program reviews to manage program enrollments. Once this plan is complete, IUSB will transition to an annual program viability review process, managed by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (EVCAA) and Deans, as well as through regular program review to assess and address enrollment concerns. By Fall 2026, revised program review and program viability processes will have been developed.

Part 4: Additional Information

Notes about Spring 2024:

- Initial focus was on extremely low-enrolled undergraduate programs (less than 10 enrolled in fall 2023 and/or 10 graduates in last five years), which included Medical Laboratory Science and Music Performance majors.
- These programs were requested to make high-level strategy (or approach) decisions in spring 2024.
- In 2024-25 the chosen high-level strategy will be developed into detailed plans, including timeline for implementation and evidence-based estimates for impact to enrollment/completion.
- *Important:* The low-enrolled programs shared among regional campuses identified by the VP & Regional Chancellors (Anthropology, French, German, Philosophy, Sociology) were given specific paths to explore and timelines for completion, separate from this campus LMP process.

Concluding LMP Notes: The LMP process will be continuously reviewed and improved based on what we learn throughout the process and based on faculty input. Any updates to the process will be shared via faculty governance meetings, email from the Deans and/or EVCAA, as well as in the Daily Titan. Though this process was initiated by the administration, faculty have committed time and provided feedback essential to create a process most beneficial to our campus and our mission. As such, every effort will be made to help the new Chancellor understand the collective effort that has gone into developing this process and addressing our low enrolled programs, with the hope that they will continue to support both the in process and planned work.