

The University of Scranton
Planning, Assessment & Institutional Research Office
Guidelines for Needs Analysis for New Academic Program Proposals

The Provost's "Guidelines for Approval of New Academic Programs," state that an analysis of program need and market must be conducted and its findings included in each new program proposal. The Planning, Assessment & Institutional Research Office (PAIRO) acts as a resource to departments for the completion of this section of the proposal.

In support of the University's planning activities, PAIRO regularly monitors external trends that affect how the institution interacts with its communities and environment. The office maintains a library of data and information which captures and examines social and demographic trends; trends in technology and other resources; developments in higher education and general education operations, perceptions, and policy; and economic and employment trends and projections.

The office is prepared to review and research current literature in order to identify and analyze materials which may provide insight to the "fit" of a proposed program with its potential market. This analysis includes examination of the student pipeline into the program and anticipated enrollment, regional and local competition, and employment prospects for those graduating from the proposed program.

Elements of Need/Market Analysis:

Program Need and Enrollment

Through researching the trends in such topics as K-12 and professional student pipelines, Census and other population projections, high school graduation rates and projections, general and program-specific educational trends, employment trends and employment need projections, and the current nature of the field of study, PAIRO can help identify program need and demand for enrollment. Sources may include the National Center for Education Statistics, data from the U.S. Department of Education, the Pennsylvania State Data Center, and the American Council on Education.

Graduate Prospects

PAIRO can provide information on employment prospects for graduates of the program through analysis of local, state, and national labor market data and employment projections, economic trends and outlook, and employment and placement of recent University graduates. Some sources include the U.S. Department of Labor, the Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, and selected regional state departments of labor and industry and economic development.

Program Competition

PAIRO can help identify current local and regional program competition by review and inquiry of current programs available from area institutions. The office can research the University's peer, competitor, and aspirant schools to determine what, if any, program overlap and/or competition exist.

Departments can anticipate a completed analysis in about 4-6 weeks following PAIRO receipt of request.