

## Resource Misallocation Hurts Arts & Sciences Graduate Programs

[Fadhel Kaboub](#) Oct . 05 . 2003

In these years of fiscal crises, UMKC is struggling to honor its commitment to both high-quality education and cutting-edge research. Tuition fees continue to increase, university funding continues to decrease, and hopes for improvements are vanishing with the current economic recession that the U.S. is going through.

UMKC's largest school, the College of Arts & Sciences (A&S) is key to UMKC's success.

One would normally think that resource allocation among academic departments within the A&S ought to be proportional to academic excellence as represented by some key factors such as size and growth rate of students enrollment, teaching record, research grants, scholarly publications, national and international recognition and service to the community. This, however, does not seem to be the case.

Data from the A&S Dean's office and from "Statistical Profiles, 1999, College of Arts & Sciences" suggest that support for graduate programs in A&S is severely misallocated. In 2002, of the top six graduate programs (respectively: Economics, Social Work, Sociology, Theatre, Psychology, Art & Art History) only the psychology department received graduate support proportional to its rank.

When looking at department ranking based on scholarly and academic quality, we find that of the 22 new tenure track faculty positions granted to the College in 2002-2003, five of the top six departments received 6 new tenure track faculty positions, whereas the lowest six departments received 9 new tenure track faculty hires.

This disproportional allocation of resources seems to go against UMKC's commitment to academic excellence. I should mention, however, that some departments have lost many faculty positions due to the retirement of many senior professors in a short time period, which also suggests that UMKC should plan carefully its hiring policy in order to avoid mass retirement in a short amount of time. The mathematics and statistics department is one such case.

A&S needs to rethink its resource allocation policy and make it consistent with Chancellor Gilliland's position that resources should follow results. Failure to do so will continue to hurt academic units that have gained regional, national, and international recognition despite the few resources made available to them.

Graduate students who make the choice to come to UMKC should have greater support. The only way for UMKC to attract high-quality graduate students is by increasing its support to the successful graduate programs in A&S

Perhaps more transparency with regards to resource allocation within A&S would make it explicit that resources are allocated based on academic excellence rather than internal politics. In the meanwhile, graduate students will continue to pay the price for this resource misallocation.

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