

THE THREE-TRACK SYSTEM: RECOMMENDATIONS TO
ACADEMIC COUNCIL—30 NOVEMBER 1999

*Summer School Committee: Gary Marshall (Chair), Jim Gee, Kevin Anderson,
Matt Geddes, Lee Warnick*

*Editor's Note: After a pilot program of the three-track system failed in 1996, the
idea was shelved in favor of the Fast-Track program. In 1999 the Academic
Council revisited the three-track idea as a way of increasing Summer School
enrollment. A committee was formed to investigate the implications of such a move,
and this is their report.*

1. MOVE AHEAD ON AN AGGRESSIVE SCHEDULE AND ADMIT
ALL STUDENTS BEGINNING IN 2000.

Based on numbers furnished by the admissions office, only about 700-800 students were denied admission for fall 1999. It may only require (in the year 2000) putting 500 students in a summer/fall track and 500 students in a winter/summer track and then reducing by 250 or 350 the number of students admitted on the fall/winter track to accomplish our goal of turning no one away. We can make adjustments and accommodate students on a gradual basis as the need increases in future years.

**Our goal was to
turn no one away.**

2. THE ADMISSION TRACKS SHOULD BE DESIGNATED IN THE
FOLLOWING WAY:

Track 1: *Summer/Fall* (bar Winter enrollment)

Track 2: *Fall/Winter* (including some students who have a Summer requirement for Fall enrollment)

Track 3: *Winter/Summer* or *Summer/Winter/Summer*
(bar Fall enrollment)

Note: If we look at the tracks this way, anyone in any track could actually begin in the summer. Students who are barred from enrolling in the fall (Track 3) could stay in Rexburg and take classes at night, over the internet, or at ISU/UI Idaho Falls Center. Or they could leave and come back in January. Or they could opt not to start until January. Students who are barred from enrolling in the winter (Track 1) could stay in Rexburg and take classes at night, over the internet, or at ISU/UI Idaho Falls Center. Or they could leave and come back in May. Students in Track 2 do not have to be barred from any semester.

3. SOME AREAS OF CONCERN THAT MUST BE DISCUSSED.

- a. We would have to be willing to have some fluctuations in student enrollments during the first years (perhaps fluctuating between 8500 and 8900 students).
- b. Admitting all students except those who are given “hard” denials means that the ratio of women to men will increase and students with lower academic abilities will be admitted.
- c. There seems to be little need to make any major adjustments in the next couple of years to faculty assignments for summer. But these issues will be more important as summer school enrollments gradually increase and we learn to better accommodate students’ needs in the summer.
- d. Will this affect scholarships? It seems that scholarships ought to be offered on the basis of merit, and if some of those students opt for or are asked to take tracks 1 or 3, then their scholarship should definitely go with them.
- e. Graduation—Nothing here needs immediate adjustment, although changes may need to be made in the future.
- f. Adjustments for application deadlines—Nothing would need to be done here for 2000. But certainly for future years this needs attention next spring.
- g. Incentives—Do students in Tracks 1 and 3 need any other incentives to come? Giving tuition reductions, etc., may create more harm than good.

4. THE FOLLOWING ISSUES NEED IMMEDIATE ATTENTION:

- a. We need to determine various ways that the program can be “sold” to parents and students. All the possible advantages need to be discussed and presented to students on the Ricks Home Page and in admissions materials that are sent to them in the spring.
- b. The Admissions Office needs to be given a chance to iron out the details of how they would proceed with this idea.
- c. The Division Deans and Department Chairmen need to identify additional programs that could be offered in the summer. Course offerings need to be adjusted in some areas to accommodate more students in the non-traditional tracks so they can more nearly take any course in any semester.

- d. Programs that need to remain on the traditional track must be identified.
- e. Faculty must be made aware of the new program and given sufficient information to advise students appropriately.
- f. Off-campus housing: Some immediate steps need to be taken by the Housing Office to educate landlords to the plan. We ought to encourage landlords in the strongest terms possible to start offering semester contracts and/or contracts for specific tracks. ☹