UCC Program Review Committee summary of review

Program – Equine Studies

This program includes the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- Associates of Applied Science in Equine Studies

Recommendation

This program is found to be viable, see the report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

Date of last review – AY 2008
Date of this review – Spring 2015

This review has been sent to program chair and the dean, they have commented on the review and the comments are attached at the end.
Seven-Year Review
Associates of Applied Science in Equine Studies
Ohio University – Southern
April 33, 2015

External Reviewers:

Dr. Karin D. Bump, Professor of Equine Studies, Cazenovia College & National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics (NAEAA)

Timothy Williams, Visiting Instructor, Cazenovia College & National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics (NAEAA)

Internal Reviewers:

Dr. Vicky Parker, Associate Professor, Ohio University – Chillicothe

Dr. Barbara Trube, Professor, Ohio University-Chillicothe

I. Purpose

The intention and purpose of this program review for the Associates of Applied Science Degree (AAS) program in Equine Studies at Ohio University – Southern (OUS) is to report on the general program, faculty profile, programmatic practices, curriculum, teaching, students, adequacy of resources, commendations, concerns, and recommendations. The program review is based upon the Equine Studies Self-Study from October 11, 2014 and information gathered during an on-site visit in the Spring semester of the 2014-2015 academic year on April 3, 2015.

External reviewers brought expertise from their academic backgrounds and professional affiliations. External reviewers actively conducted a peer review around the constructs of student knowledge, student skills, trajectory of graduates, program reputation, and program sustainability. Dr. Karin Bump is a Professor of Equine Studies at Cazenovia College in New York and a reviewer for the National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics. Tim Williams is a Visiting Instructor at Cazenovia College and a National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics reviewer. Internal reviewers were Dr. Vicky Parker, Assistant Professor at Ohio University – Chillicothe (OUC) and Dr. Barbara Trube, Professor of Education, at OUC.

During the site visit the reviewers interviewed one faculty member, who also serves as Program Director, one faculty member with full-time teaching, advising, and recruitment responsibilities and two part-time faculty, the Ohio University Southern (OUS) dean, three OUS faculty, one affiliated with Scripps College of Communications and two with the College of Arts and Sciences, the OUS coordinator of recruitment, six Equine Studies
students and one Equine Studies alumna, who is working at the facility. External reviewers “walked the site” and internal reviewers viewed the video which showed the OHIO Horse Park as a working site and classroom with faculty and student commentaries.

This report contains a Signature Sheet, Executive Summary, Program Review, Conclusion, and a Letter from External Reviewers. A detailed peer review from NAEAA reviewers is attached to the report. While the comments of the external reviewers are embedded within the report, the report from External Reviews provides substantive and strategic information which will be of value to the Equine Studies program.

II. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary includes commendations, concerns, and recommendations for the A.A.S. in Equine Studies.

1) Commendations

- Faculty in the A.A.S. Equine Studies program are well qualified and hold specializations related to the industry. Faculty have master’s degrees in fields of study that serve individuals who would benefit from programs offered through Equine Studies (i.e., social work and therapeutic riding).
- The Horse Park facility is located on an 180+ acre property owned by OUS. There are four barns; two rings; two indoor arenas; two outdoor arenas; boarding space for students’ horses; a Therapeutic Horsemanship Center with classrooms, offices, and restrooms; and a Welcome Center with classrooms and restrooms.
- Horses provide A.A.S. Equine Studies students with hands-on experiences and training related to their program-of-study. Because students seeking certification through Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH) need a number of hours riding and handling horses, having horses that students can effectively work with is a critical part of the program. Horses are part of the performance teams (i.e., western, hunt-seat teams) in which students participate.
- The A.A.S. Equine Studies program has received national recognition from PATH for their therapeutic riding program. The therapeutic riding program has been recognized by President Roderick McDavis as a Point of Pride at OU.
- The Horse Park is a Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) and PATH testing center. Faculty have appropriate credentials to contribute to the work of the testing center.
- Students enrolled in the A.A.S. Equine Studies program demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to contribute significantly to the equine industry upon graduation. The program draws students from outside of the region (i.e. Washington, D.C., Columbus). Students are pursuing baccalaureate degrees in programs outside of Equine Studies, however, the students expressed a commitment to stay involved in therapeutic riding in their future professions (i.e. social work, psychology).
The Equine Studies program is developing an articulation agreement with Cazenovia College in New York; and has articulation agreements in progress with The State University of New York (SUNY) Cobleskill and the Veterinary Technology at Mountwest Community and Technical College. There are currently four articulation agreements with Career and Technical Centers.

The faculty members have recently proposed a more streamlined set of degree offerings that appears more efficient based on the strength of the program and the number of students.

A report entitled “Equine Studies Program Expense Reduction and Income Improvement Proposal” was prepared for the Dean of the Campus on January 17, 2015, outlining efficiencies and ways to address costs.

A SWOT analysis was recently conducted by the Director and faculty.

The Equine Studies program has an Advisory Board.

Concerns

Currently, Equine Studies is a high cost program with some history of low enrollment and low graduation rates.

*Faculty is focused on assisting former students to complete courses and/or the application process for graduation.*

There was a lack of evidence with statistical data related to the graduation rates, attrition rates, or retention rates. This appears to be a college wide concern rather than an equine program specific concern.

*Faculty agrees with this concern and methods of tracking are being looked at to improve the tracking of students.*

Goals and program learning outcomes were provided, however, there was no documentation of evidence given.

*A formal process for assessing learning outcomes within the courses and after course completion has been implemented. The data for this process has not been evaluated at this time.*

There are concerns about the facility that are addressed in the Recommendations for Equine Facility section of this report.

Recommendations

Create formal articulation agreements within Regional Higher Education, such as the BTAS & BSAM degrees.

*This will be explored and discussed further.*

Recommend consideration of a Group I faculty position for the Director.

*This will be explored and discussed further.*

Develop avenues for research at the OHIO Horse Park.
Faculty will begin research with teens participating in equine assisted learning in the near future. There are other opportunities that need to be explored.

- Employer evaluations of students after graduation need to be developed. The NAEAA is currently developing an employer evaluation survey, which could be used for this process.  
  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Formal alumni linkages need to be formed for student networking, internships and employment opportunities. The NAEAA is currently developing an alumni survey which could be used for this process.  
  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Continue to identify and implement efficiencies and cost-saving measures.  
  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Construct additional fenced paddocks to allow more frequent turnout; this will reduce some program expenses  
  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Create formal internal articulation agreements with other College/University programs to promote graduation in both the associate and baccalaureate programs.  
  *Currently in discussion.*

- Continue to identify ways that the property may be used as a Revenue Center rather than the current focus as a Cost Center.  
  *Currently in discussion.*

- Work with the recruitment officer to develop a targeted recruitment plan for the equine program along with analytics to determine the effectiveness (yield) of each approach.  
  *Faculty is working closely with the recruitment office to develop this plan.*

- Increase equine course fees overall and consider differential rates based on the type of course (riding and training courses with a higher rate than other courses).  
  *Course fees have been increased in courses involving higher horse usage. The fees are in place for fall. Plans for increased fees in the remaining courses are in discussion.*

- Develop consistent language for students who are intending to finish their associate and then continue for a bachelor degree at the institution. As students enter, consider having them declare both, but require that they complete the associate (and register to ‘earn’ the AAS degree) in order to matriculate in the bachelor degree program. This would address the problems currently encountered with accurately recording the AAS degree completion rate.  
  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Consider ways to help students see that the equine program is ‘recognized’ on campus. Suggestions include regularly posting emails, campus newsletters (etc.) in which communication regarding the equine program is shared with the larger community. Another suggestion is to hold ‘barn’ days for Campus faculty and staff (if this is not already occurring).  
  *Faculty has discussed hosting faculty and staff at the Ohio Horse Park, but has not implemented this. Faculty, students, and staff contribute to the OUS newsletter and also the OU newsletter, but should do this more often and in a timely manner.*
Complete a position responsibility ‘audit’ for the two full time faculty members to determine equity in workload (teaching, advising, responsibilities for the equine facility including community usage, etc.). Use findings to determine if adjustments to load and/or compensation should be made.

*Associate Dean will work with Faculty to evaluate work load and responsibilities.*

- Develop a uniform tracking and reporting mechanism for graduation and employment and rates across the Campus as well as within the equine program.
  
  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Utilize the program advisory board for fundraising and assistance in recruiting equipment donations. Consider adding national members to the advisory board for broader industry reach.

  *The Advisory Board needs to be refreshed and additional members added from a broader geographical area due to our students relocating national wide for employment.*

- Use the existing ‘unfilled line’ to develop an administrative staff position to assist faculty members particularly in regard to coordination of therapeutic and community use of facility. Assistance with these areas should ‘free-up’ the current faculty to implement revenue enhancing ideas and initiatives.

  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

**Recommendations specific to teaching/learning:**

- Consider moving the maximum cap of riding classes to 8 and institute a riding level assessment program and schedule courses according to levels. The current two level system coupled with an enrollment cap of 10 is seen by the reviewers as problematic from the perspectives of both safety and student learning. Reviewers suggest at minimum: Beginner, Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, and Advanced.

  *Courses will return to eight per course.*

- Develop a mechanism for posting jobs regularly and retaining those posted jobs on an annual basis. This would replace the current email system which does not provide for ‘banking’ of current and past job openings.

  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Utilize the advisory board for more student networking opportunities with professionals. Suggestions are to annually invite advisory board members to speak to classes, attend events, be available for student interviews, etc.

  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Develop an alumni-networking system so that current students have more contact with alumni for class projects/assignments, internship exploration, and job placement.

  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

- Develop rubrics for assessing written work within equine courses.

  *Some Faculty use rubrics for their courses, but these were not submitted for review. A syllabus checklist is in use by the Curriculum Committee. Syllabi are compared to the checklist and feedback provided.*
• Consider adding a focused section to an existing course to discuss issues related to equine welfare. If curricular space allows, consider adding a full course on this topic.
  
  *EQU 2020 – Equine Behavior and Welfare Issues is currently in the curriculum and course approval process.*

• Consider adding a section to an existing course to discuss team work dynamics and team work ‘best practices’.
  
  *EQU 2000 Equine Industry: Career and Leadership Development is currently in the curriculum and course approval process.*

• Require students to own their own ASTM/SEI approved riding helmets (this may already be in process)
  
  *In discussion.*

• Use some of the newly created on-line courses to encourage degree completion for students who enter the industry without fully earning their degree.

• *Former students who have not completed the degree have been notified about this opportunity. Eight students have responded that they are interested in completing the degree.*

• Review Federal Guidelines for unpaid internships in for-profit businesses. Adjust placement and paperwork accordingly and consider adding a learning component that includes weekly meetings and/or blackboard discussions and assignments.
  
  NOTE: There is renewed emphasis on this across higher education. It is our understanding that in order for internships to be unpaid, employers/sites must follow the six criteria listed at the web site link provided here:
  

  Problems/law suits happen when students believe they are being treated unfairly or in ways for which they should be compensated and then file complaints with the Department of Labor.
  
  *This will be explored and discussed further.*

**Recommendation related to the equine facility**

• A decision should be made on whether the equine facility will remain in the current location or move to a location closer to campus. Ideally a decision should be made this year so that the program can have stability and growth. While the reviewers did not visit the closer location, the visit to the existing location coupled with discussion with the program faculty resulted in an impression that the current location is better suited to program goals and long term growth. A different decision may have been drawn if the students indicated hardship in traveling to and from the main campus and/or if this was a Campus in which students were housed in dormitories.
  
  *In discussion.*

• Once a decision has been made on the long-term location, the Campus is urged to move forward with plans to build a new outdoor riding ring. The funds are in place and the need is high given the poorly constructed outdoor riding rings with poor drainage; these issues significantly impact on their ability to be used. In addition,
knowing that the funds are available but the Campus has not moved forward to utilize them sends a potentially damaging message to current and prospective students regarding the Campus’s commitment to the program. This is anticipated to impact on recruitment and retention.

Due to a recent change in leadership and inclement weather delaying construction, the arena construction was put on hold. A meeting is being planned for the near future to discuss moving forward with this project. This meeting will include Dean Nicole Pennington, the Director, and the Facilities Manager.

- Develop a system to analyze each horse in terms of amount of maximum funds that could be allocated to emergency or acute care (colic, significant injury). This will make complicated decisions less tied to emotion when a crisis occurs.

  Research and Compliance has been contacted to discuss adding this to our policies. The Faculty and Staff agree this is a good policy to include.

- Develop policies/guidelines for use in decisions pertaining to horse retirement. This should include indicators to be considered in determining if retirement is approaching and/or is imminent.

  This will be explored and discussed further.

- Initiate discussions with private veterinarians to determine interest in/feasibility of usage of space at the current equine facility to establish a practice and/or satellite office.

  This will be explored and discussed further.

- Consider developing a fundraising plan to finish the space in the main building so that it can be used for community lectures and events.

  This will be explored and discussed further.

III. Program Review

1) General Program Summary

The Equine Studies Program began at Ohio University – Southern in the early 1990's. An Associates of Applied Science Degree was developed and began enrolling students. The program initially used leased land, and later moved to an 180+ acre property owned by Ohio University – Southern. In 2002 a therapeutic riding curriculum was implemented. By 2013, the OHIO Horse Park was approved as a Premiere Center for Therapeutic Horsemanship and became certified by Horsemanship International as a training center.

The Associates in Applied Science degree in Equine Studies is designed to prepare students for employment as trained professionals in the equine industry. Each student has the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the areas of riding instruction, therapeutic riding, farm management and business, pre-animal science, and pre-veterinary technology. Students select from specialized tracks and concentrations to tailor the program to their professional interests for workplace employment. Students have the ability to become certified in specializations as a part of their course work. Four equestrian teams
are currently part of the curriculum and include: hunt seat, western, western dressage and traditional dressage. The objectives of the program are, as follows:

- Develop an appreciation and understanding of horses through the study of anatomy and physiology and through participating in the psychological process of working with and caring for the horse.
- Achieve an understanding of the scientific knowledge necessary to care for, feed, and maintain a horse, to allow it to reach its highest potential.
- Learn the legal and ethical issues of the horse industry.
- Be introduced to and allowed to practice the methods used to train horses and riders and be informed about the variety of purposes and events for which this training is provided.
- Be able to do all these activities in a safe manner.
- Learn modern business and farm management skills necessary to succeed in the equine industry today.
- Improve human relations skills as well as communication skills in reading, writing, and speaking.
- Know the value of a good work ethic.

Based on the review process, the Equine Studies Program meets its overall goal. The program provides students with the knowledge and practical horse experience necessary for gaining a position within the equine industry. Students are able to specialize and obtain certifications from professional associations in the equine industry as part of their coursework. In addition, the program provides a service to the community in the form of services for local horse owners, recreational opportunities for children, youth and adults in riding instruction, and opportunities for therapeutic services to several organizations.

2) Faculty Profile

Two Group II faculty with master’s degrees and two Group III faculty, one with a master’s degree and the other with a baccalaureate degree with specializations/certifications, were interviewed. All four faculty members have expertise in a variety of specializations in the equine industry and stay current with the trends and needs in the industry. There is a total of five Group III faculty who work in the program throughout an academic year.

Upon review of the information in the self-study and as a result of personal interviews, the reviewers found that the four faculty interviewed are qualified to teach the courses for which they have been assigned at the 1000-2000 levels. The veterinarian instructs students when he visits once a month.

Faculty serve on a variety of OUS campus committees and contribute to professional communities. Faculty are members of and certified by international organizations in the areas of teaching riding, competitions, therapeutic riding, and farm management.

3) Programmatic Practices
The Equine Studies program and faculty serve surrounding communities through providing youth programs that involve both able bodied as well people with challenges. Our OHIO Horse Park Center for Therapeutic and Community Horsemanship serves over 30 participants per week providing equestrian services to those who might not have that opportunity otherwise.

4) Curriculum

The self-study reported that program offers core courses to form a solid foundation in the basics of equine studies. Students may then select from specialized tracks or concentrations to specifically tailor the program to their needs and interests. Courses combine lectures and laboratory work. Lectures are to inform the students of related equine information and skills with labs providing opportunities to apply the knowledge. Internships are also available to students.

The minimum requirement for the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree is completion of 60 credits with a 2.0 accumulative GPA upon graduation. A maximum of 15 credits earned through experiential learning may be applied to any technical associate degree. Students must earn a minimum of 18 semester credit hours while enrolled at Ohio University and a minimum of 50 percent of coursework taken to fulfill the major concentration in residence with resident credit as Graduation Requirements. Students must meet Ohio University General Education requirements for associate degrees. The following list of courses are organized by tracks as listed on the Ohio University-Southern website.

General Education
All Equine Studies students must complete the Freshman English and quantitative skills requirements.

Required Equine Core Coursework
Complete the following courses:
- EQU 1000: Equine Studies Introduction (2 hrs)
- EQU 1010: Basic Equine Health Care (2 hrs)
- EQU 1020: Basic Horse Handling (2 hrs)
- EQU 1030: Equine Facility Management I (2 hrs)
- EQU 1040: Equine Facility Management II (2 hrs)

Track A: Riding Instruction/Therapeutic Riding Instruction
Required Equine Courses
Riding Instruction Complete the following courses:
- EQU 1062: Equestrian Teaching Techniques (2 hrs)
- EQU 2062: Equestrian Teaching Practicum (3 hrs)

Riding Instruction Business Management Complete the following courses:
- EQU 2031: Equine Business Management (2 hrs)
Elective Equine Requirements
Complete 4 hours from the following courses:
EQU 2030: Farm Design/Stable Management (2 hrs)
EQU 2041: Horse Judging (2 hrs)
EQU 2042: Horse Show & Event Management (2 hrs)
EQU 2080: Therapeutic Riding Overview (2 hrs)
EQU 2081: Admin Therapeutic Riding (1 hr)
EQU 2910: Equine Internship (1-3 hrs)
EQU 2990: Studies in Equine Issues (1-3 hrs)

Required General Courses
ATCH 1030: Financial Acct Procedures (3 hrs)
BIOL 1010: Principles of Biology (4 hrs)
BMT 1010: Business and Its Environment (3 hrs)
BMT 1100: Introduction to Management (3 hrs)
ENG 1510: Writing and Rhetoric I (3 hrs)
MATH 1090: Consumer Mathematics (3 hrs)

**Track B: Assistant Trainer**

Required Equine Courses
Horse Selection, Training, and Care Courses
Complete the following courses:
EQU 1070: Equine Nutrition (3 hrs)
EQU 2071: Equine Anatomy and Physiology (3 hrs)
EQU 2072: Equine Lameness & Conditioning (3 hrs)
EQU 2910: Equine Internship (Complete at least 1 hour) (1-3 hrs)

Business and Farm Management
Complete the following courses:
EQU 2030: Farm Design/Stable Management (2 hrs)
EQU 2031: Equine Business Management (2 hrs)

Elective Equine Requirements
Competition and Judging
EQU 2041: Horse Judging (2 hrs)
EQU 2042: Horse Show & Event Management (2 hrs)

Required General Requirements
Complete the following courses:
BIOL 1010: Principles of Biology (4 hrs)
BMT 1100: Introduction to Management (3 hrs)
ENG 1510: Writing and Rhetoric I (3 hrs)
MATH 1090: Consumer Mathematics (3 hrs)
**Required Equine Riding Courses: Track A and B**

Complete the Following Courses:
- EQU 1060: Introduction to Western Riding (2 hrs)
- EQU 1061: Introduction to English Riding (2 hrs)
- EQU 1071: Equine Evaluation & Selection (2 hrs)
- EQU 2060: Advanced Western Riding (2 hrs)
- EQU 2061: Advanced English Riding (2 hrs)
- EQU 2063: Train & Evaluate Lesson Horses (3 hrs)

**Elective General Requirements**

Track A complete 5 hours from the following courses:
- ATCH 1040: Managerial Acct Procedures (3 hrs)
- COMS 1010: Fundamentals of Human Comm (3 hrs)
- EXPH 2280: First Aid/CPR for the Profes (2 hrs)
- PSY 1010: General Psychology (3 hrs)
- PSY 2410: Child & Adolescent Psychology (3 hrs)

**Track B**

Complete 6 hours from the following courses:
- ATCH 1040: Managerial Acct Procedures (3 hrs)
- COMS 1010: Fundamentals of Human Comm (3 hrs)
- EXPH 2280: First Aid/CPR for the Profes (2 hrs)
- PSY 1010: General Psychology (3 hrs)
- PSY 2410: Child & Adolescent Psychology (3 hrs)

**Track C: Farm Business and Management**

Required Equine Farm and Stable Management Courses

Complete the following courses:
- EQU 2030: Farm Design/Stable Management (2 hrs)
- EQU 2031: Equine Business Management (2 hrs)
- EQU 2032: Pasture Establishment & Mgt (2 hrs)

Farm Management Internship

Complete the following course:
- EQU 2910: Equine Internship (1-3 hrs)

**Additional Elective Equine Requirements**

Complete at least 4 hours from the following courses:
- EQU 1060: Introduction to Western Riding (2 hrs)
- EQU 1061: Introduction to English Riding (2 hrs)
- EQU 2030: Farm Design/Stable Management (2 hrs)
- EQU 2040: Basic Horse Shoeing (2 hrs)
- EQU 2060: Advanced Western Riding (2 hrs)
- EQU 2080: Therapeutic Riding Overview (2 hrs)
- EQU 2081: Admin Therapeutic Riding (1 hrs)

**Additional Required General Courses**

Complete the following courses:
- ATCH 1030: Financial Acct Procedures (3 hrs)
- ATCH 1040: Managerial Acct Procedures (3 hrs)
Elective General Requirements
Complete 9 hours from the following courses:
BMT 1100: Introduction to Management (2 hrs)
BMT 2000: Intro to Business Computing (2 hrs)
COMS 1030: Public Speaking (2 hrs)
PSY 1010: General Psychology (3 hrs)

**Track D: Pre-animal Science/Pre-veterinary Technology**

Required Additional Equine Health and Veterinary Science Courses
Complete the following courses:
EQU 2071: Equine Anatomy and Physiology (3 hrs)
EQU 2074: Equine Veterinary Technology (3 hrs)

12 Additional Elective Equine Requirements
EQU 1060: Introduction to Western Riding (2 hrs)
EQU 1061: Introduction to English Riding (2 hrs)
EQU 2031: Equine Business Management (2 hrs)
EQU 2040: Basic Horse Shoeing (2 hrs)
EQU 2080: Therapeutic Riding Overview (2 hrs)
EQU 2081: Admin Therapeutic Riding (1 hr)
EQU 2910: Equine Internship (1-3 hrs)
EQU 2990: Studies in Equine Issues (1-3 hrs)

Elective General Courses
Complete 8 hours from the following courses:
BMT 1010: Business and Its Environment (3 hrs)
BMT 1400: Concepts of Marketing (3 hrs)
COMS 1030: Public Speaking (3 hrs)
CTCH 1250: Introduction to Computers (3 hrs)
PSY 1010: General Psychology (3 hrs)

**Required General Courses: Track C and D**

Complete the following courses:
BIOL 1010: Principles of Biology (4 hrs)
BMT 1100: Introduction to Management (3 hrs)
ENG 1510: Writing and Rhetoric I (3 hrs)
MATH 1090: Consumer Mathematics (3 hrs)

Equine Health Care Courses
Complete the following course:
EQU 1070: Equine Nutrition (3 hrs)
EQU 1071: Equine Evaluation & Selection (2 hrs)
EQU 2072: Equine Lameness & Conditioning (3 hrs)
EQU 2073: Equine Reproduction (3 hrs)

5) Teaching & Mentoring

Based on the self-study and on-site review, teaching assignments are made based on area of expertise and faculty availability. The Director, one of two Group II faculty, mentors new faculty in syllabi preparation and delivery, Blackboard use, and works to provide resources they may need to teach effectively.

6) Research (if applicable)

Research is not currently part of the program, however, reviewers feel there are multiple opportunities for the students and faculty to be involved in research. The time required to conduct research would need to be considered in light of an already heavy faculty workload.

*Opportunities for research exist in equine assisted learning sessions and other areas.*

7) Students

Based on the on-site review, there are currently forty-four students enrolled in the program. Students report high satisfaction with the Equine Studies program. Many of the students are pursuing baccalaureate degrees in fields that use Therapeutic Riding. Evaluation of the curriculum during interviews with students revealed that students in the program have opportunities for synthesis, through testing and class projects. Diversity issues are studied as they occur within the industry and are discussed in classes. Students have opportunities to complete a variety of elective credits enabling them to concentrate their studies in therapeutic riding, and horse training.

Although the program goal, objectives/student outcomes and required courses provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills for obtaining an entry level position in the horse industry, there is minimal evidence that the student outcomes have been assessed.

8) Alumni Profile

Based on information gathered during the on-site visit, a database of alumni does not currently exist. The Self Study and interviews revealed that many graduates receive positions in the equine industry upon graduation. An alumna of the program was among the people interviewed.

9) Adequacy of Resources

The program is located at the Ohio Horse Park, a 180+ acre facility. The facility includes two indoor arenas, two outdoor arenas, and boarding for student horses. The Ohio Horse Park Center for Therapeutic Riding is a nationally accredited center serving needs of the local community. Students actively instruct participants, evaluate and train horses, and work administratively to assist in managing the OHIO Horse
Park. It was reported that due to inadequate drainage of some of the rings, some of the facilities are only available for four to five months out of the year. Based on the on-site review, more pasture space is needed with additional fencing for horse pastures. The OHIO Horse Park has over 100 stalls and 180 acres but only a few acres of fenced pasture for the Campus's horses. Horses are housed in stalls resulting in increased costs for labor, feed, bedding and upkeep of horses. To reduce program costs, the university is encouraged to construct fences and house horses outside.

10) Recruiting
The self-study and the on-site review provided evidence that time is dedicated to recruitment. The Equine Studies Program is responsible for most of the recruiting efforts. Faculty and staff work closely with the Ohio University Southern Recruiter. Recruitment efforts include the following:

- Developed recruiting materials specifically for Equine Studies, including an informational video.
- Developed a student ambassador program.
- Developed a newly implemented tracking system of all potential students. This includes all contact information, method of contact, follow up contact information, as well as how they learned about the program.
- A system has been developed with the OUS Recruiting Office for those potential students who request tours. They tour campus first to learn about the campus, student services, financial aid, and other related information. They then tour the Ohio Horse Park. These tours are led by trained ambassadors and, as often as possible, a faculty member meets with them.
- Most recently, the program purchased a mailing list from career centers. These are high school and vocational programs that offer an agriculture, animal science, and/or equine program. An equine list serve was developed.

IV. External Review Letter
Attached.

V. Response Letters
1. Director/Chair
2. Dean
Mr. Timothy Williams and Dr. Karin Bump  
c/o Timothy Williams  
4029 Stonebridge Road  
Cazenovia NY, 13035  
315-391-6410  

April 8, 2015  

Dear Dr. Nicole Pennington,  

We had the honor and privilege to serve on the review committee for the Ohio University Southern Equine Studies program. While our full report is included as an appendix to this letter, it is important to briefly highlight some of our observations and thoughts.  

Our review involved two overarching principles—an evaluation of the academic quality of the equine program as a whole, along with standard of care, safety and usage of the horses. While recommendations for improvement will always be present in reviews, the overall impression of our observations and review indicate that the equine program is accomplishing its academic goals and that the horses are well-cared for.  

Throughout the review, we were impressed with the faculty and students in the program and found ample evidence of current strength and future potential. In particular, the growing national reputation of the Therapeutic Riding Program is a testament to the knowledge, enthusiasm, and dedication of the program faculty. We feel it is poised for continued growth and recognition.  

Our approach to the review of the academic components of the program involved the use of a document developed through the membership of the National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics (NAEAA). The NAEAA membership identified ‘Indicators of Excellence (IOE)’ for undergraduate programs in the equine discipline and NAEAA has identified five key IOE Constructs for use in determining programmatic excellence. Within each Construct, 1-3 areas are defined with a set of evaluation questions for each. The Constructs are listed below:  

- Construct 1 – Student Knowledge  
- Construct 2 – Student Skills  
- Construct 3 – Trajectory of Graduates  
- Construct 4 – Program Reputation  
- Construct 5 – Program Sustainability
Our findings on these Constructs are included as an addendum to this letter.

In addition to the NAEAA program evaluation tool, we utilized a document from the EQUUS Foundation for reviewing the horses and the Ohio Horse Park facility. The EQUUS Foundation tool was developed to evaluate basic standards of care and usage of horses in several scenarios including Therapeutic Riding establishments.

As a result of our review work, we have provided a list of recommendations. While they may seem expansive, the recommendations are designed to provide a framework for continued growth and improvement. They should be seen in this light rather than viewing them as areas of criticism. The AAS degree is solid and the College should have confidence in the programs viability. The faculty are to be commended for their work on significant program improvements over the past years along with more recent moves to streamline the curriculum and find innovative ways to reduce expenses and increase income.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. As Higher Education moves into the next phase of accountability and transparency, we hope that this document can serve as a template to continually improve.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Mr. Timothy Williams
Dr. Karin Bump

Attached (2) documents: Recommendations, NAEAA peer review document
**General Recommendations:**

- Work with the recruitment officer to develop a targeted recruitment plan for the equine program along with analytics to determine the effectiveness (yield) of each approach.
- Increase equine course fees overall and consider differential rates based on the type of course (riding and training courses with a higher rate than other courses).
- Develop consistent language for students who are intending to finish their associate and then continue for a bachelor degree at the institution. As students enter, consider having them declare both, but require that they complete the associate (and register to ‘earn’ the AAS degree) in order to matriculate in the bachelor degree program. This would address the problems currently encountered with accurately recording the AAS degree completion rate.
- Consider ways to help students see that the equine program is ‘recognized’ on campus. Suggestions include regularly posting emails, campus newsletters (etc.) in which communication regarding the equine program is shared with the larger community. Another suggestion is to hold ‘barn’ days for College faculty and staff (if this is not already occurring).
- Complete a position responsibility ‘audit’ for the two full time faculty members to determine equity in work load (teaching, advising, responsibilities for the equine facility including community usage, etc.). Use findings to determine if adjustments to load and/or compensation should be made.
- Develop a uniform tracking and reporting mechanism for graduation and employment and rates across the College as well as within the equine program.
- Utilize the program advisory board for fundraising and assistance in recruiting equipment donations. Consider adding national members to the advisory board for broader industry reach.
- Use the existing ‘unfilled line’ to develop an administrative staff position to assist faculty members particularly in regard to coordination of therapeutic and community use of facility. Assistance with these areas should ‘free-up’ the current faculty to implement revenue enhancing ideas and initiatives.

**Recommendations specific to teaching/learning:**

- Consider moving the maximum cap of riding classes to 8 and institute a riding level assessment program and schedule courses according to levels. The current two level system coupled with an enrollment cap of 10 is seen by the reviewers as problematic from the perspectives of both safety and student learning. Reviewers suggest at minimum: Beginner, Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, and Advanced.
• Develop a mechanism for posting jobs regularly and retaining those posted jobs on an
annual basis. This would replace the current email system which does not provide for
‘banking’ of current and past job openings.
• Utilize the advisory board for more student networking opportunities with
professionals. Suggestions are to annually invite advisory board members to speak to
classes, attend events, be available for student interviews, etc.
• Develop an alumni networking system so that current students have more contact with
alumni for class projects/assignments, internship exploration, and job placement.
• Develop rubrics for assessing written work within equine courses.
• Consider adding a focused section to an existing course to discuss issues related to
equine welfare. If curricular space allows, consider adding a full course on this topic.
• Consider adding a section to an existing course to discuss team work dynamics and team
work ‘best practices’.
• Require students to own their own ASTM/SEI approved riding helmets (this may already
be in process)
• Use some of the newly created on-line courses to encourage degree completion for
students who enter the industry without fully earing their degree.
• Review Federal Guidelines for unpaid internships in for-profit businesses. Adjust
placement and paperwork accordingly and consider adding a learning component that
includes weekly meetings and/or blackboard discussions and assignments. NOTE: There
is renewed emphasis on this across higher education. It is our understanding that in
order for internships to be unpaid, employers/sites must follow the six criteria listed at the web
site link provided here: http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.pdf
Problems/law suits happen when students believe they are being treated unfairly or in ways for
which they should be compensated and then file complaints with the Department of Labor.

Recommendations related to the equine facility

• A decision should be made on whether the equine facility will remain in the current location or
move to a location closer to campus. Ideally a decision should be made this year so that the
program can have stability and growth. While the reviewers did not visit the closer location, the
visit to the existing location coupled with discussion with the program faculty resulted in an
impression that the current location is better suited to program goals and long term growth. A
different decision may have been drawn if the students indicated hardship in traveling to and
from the main campus and/or if this was a college in which students were housed in
dormitories.
• Once a decision has been made on the long-term location, the College is urged to move forward
with plans to build a new outdoor riding ring. The funds are in place and the need is high given
the poorly constructed outdoor riding rings with poor drainage; these issues significantly impact
on their ability to be used. In addition, knowing that the funds are available but the College has
not moved forward to utilize them sends a potentially damaging message to current and
prospective students regarding the College’s commitment to the program. This is anticipated to impact on recruitment and retention.

- If the decision is made to remain at the current facility, the lack of visual awareness of the location could be rectified with additional signage on the roads running parallel to the property.
- Develop a system to analyze each horse in terms of amount of maximum funds that could be allocated to emergency or acute care (colic, significant injury). This will make complicated decisions less tied to emotion when a crises occurs.
- Develop policies/guidelines for use in decisions pertaining to horse retirement. This should include indicators to be considered in determining if retirement is approaching and/or is imminent.
- Initiate discussions with private veterinarians to determine interest in/feasibility of usage of space at the current equine facility to establish a practice and/or satellite office.
- Consider developing a fundraising plan to finish the space in the main building so that it can be used for community lectures and events.
Excellence in Equine Undergraduate Education

NAEAA Peer Review Document

Site Name: Ohio University Southern – Associates of Applied Science in Equine Studies

Site Contact: Kelly Hall – Faculty and Program Director

External Peer Reviewer Names: Tim Williams and Dr. Karin Bump

Peer Reviewer Contact information: Twilliams@naeaa.com; kbump@cazenovia.edu

Date of Review: Friday April 3, 2015

Background of the NAEAA Peer Review Document:

In 2010 the members of the National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics engaged in a series of working sessions to develop an initial list of ‘Indicators of Excellence (IOE)’ for undergraduate programs in the equine discipline. That initial set was then used in a 2011 survey of members to gauge the level of importance of each indicator along with the ease in which respondents felt data could be gathered and used to assess success in each area. Through ongoing discussion and collaboration, NAEAA has identified five IOE Constructs for determining programmatic excellence. Within each construct, 1-3 areas were defined with a set of evaluation questions for each. The constructs are listed below:

- **Construct 1 – Student Knowledge**
- **Construct 2 – Student Skills**
- **Construct 3 – Trajectory of Graduates**
- **Construct 4 – Program Reputation**
- **Construct 5 – Program Sustainability**

Use of the NAEAA Peer Review Document

- This document is intended for use by NAEAA peer reviewers as part of an external review process. It may also be used by NAEAA members for the purpose of self-study. In either case, the intent is to generate collaborative and constructive feedback.
- The NAEAA Peer Review document may be used on its own or in conjunction with other material required at individual institutions.
- Reviewers should submit a written response to the site summarizing findings in each area.
Section 1 – General Review of Site Visit (note that discussion of IOE Constructs begins in Section 2)

Site Visit Agenda (9am start, 5:40pm finish)

I. Meeting with Students
II. Meeting with Equine program faculty – FT and adjunct
III. Meeting with other college faculty
IV. Meeting with Dean
V. Tour of Facility

I. Meeting with Students:

Opening (general) discussion:

Six students and one program alumna met with the reviewers to answer questions and discuss their experiences in, and impressions of, the program. Students represented a range of demographic and psychographic attributes including traditional and nontraditional backgrounds. All were female which is not unusual in equine programs; one student appeared to be from a minority group.

Of the students, only one had entered the program as a freshman. The others had either transferred from other programs on campus or had enrolled in the program after previous enrollment at other institutions. Students were from a larger geographic spread that would normally be found in a 2-year program but the spread is comparable to other equine programs as these programs typically draw from a larger geographic pool.

Most talked of their interest in therapeutic riding as a draw to the program. Their perception of peer interest was that about 1/3 of the students were there for therapeutic riding with the other half interested in riding and training. Interestingly, the bulk indicated that this was not a program that they had easily found and/or were immediately drawn to. Students did not tell a traditional story of ‘finding this college’ and ‘how they got there’. This seems to be more a function of a limited equine promotional and marketing plan than any reflection on the nature and quality of the program. (See recommendation related to recruitment)

The low cost of tuition coupled with the unique qualities of the program appear to be a driving factor in program enrollment. However, students appeared to have no concerns about increasing course fees if it would result in more opportunities for classes and assurance of classes running. Given that there are plans to increase course fees (which are currently quite low) their response seems to indicate that this is not seen as a hardship that would detract students from enrolling. (See recommendation related to course fees)

In terms of completion and student goals post completion, all indicated their intent to complete the associate degree. Of the students present, 3/4 indicating they would continue at the college for a bachelor degree with the other 1/4 intending to work in the industry. Interestingly, those intending to stay talked about being a ‘double major’ which was really their reference to a 2+2 track. This may indicate a need to have clearer and more consistent language about the path for those entering for an associate degree and intending to complete a bachelor’s degree program after. (See recommendation on program language as well as tracking program completion for continuing students).
In terms of discussing logistics of completing degree courses, students take all their equine courses at the equine facility and are on campus for their other coursework. Students indicated that this was not a hardship. However, students shared that they did not feel fully integrated into the larger campus community which may be a function of the commuter population. Continuing on the theme, students also indicated that they felt invisible to the larger college community even going so far to say that they weren’t sure faculty and staff on campus even realized the facility was there and if they did, they weren’t sure that it was viewed positively. One student who served as a program ambassador and was involved with tours discussed her perception of a disconnect between ‘on campus’ and ‘equine’. However, the discussion with non-equine faculty members (later portion of the site visit) presented a much different picture where they were fully aware and were highly supportive of the program. This may indicate an area to improve upon so that students are either 1) more involved in on-campus activities and/or 2) ways to let the students know that the program is recognized and embraced. (See recommendations)

Discussion of class sizes – students felt the sizes of classes was appropriate but that there would be room for some more students as long as a class like the first introductory class wasn’t bigger than 30 students. They said riding class sizes varied with some at 10 students. To the reviewers, that number seems high and might be an area to consider adjusting more in line with a cap of 8 particularly given that the riding classes are not separated out by more than 2 riding levels. (See recommendations)

When students were asked what they would tell others (friends, family, prospective students) about the program:

- Lots of hands-on
- Small and caring
- Lots of access to faculty
- Faculty really know their stuff
- Faculty really care.

When students were asked what they would like to see changed/improved

- More riding classes
- More training classes
- More hands-on classes
- Hands-on reproduction classes to augment the on-line reproduction course.
- More saddles/equipment to ensure each horse was well attired (note: students were not concerned about welfare related to equipment fit but did feel that some saddles were not an ideal fit for some of the horses – this is a function of relying solely on donations for equipment)

On the topic of advising (particularly in light of one faculty member to 40+ students noting that the faculty member teaches a full complement of courses along with significant other responsibilities) the students felt that Kelly Hall does a good job with advising and that her approach goes beyond course selection and into career mentoring. One advisor for the full population is unusual so the reviewers were concerned about ease of access for students and length of time Kelly would be able to spend with them. Students had no concerns and were quick to discuss how Kelly spends ample time with them and is always available. (See commendations)
We asked students if they were aware of an equine program advisory board as well as information on graduation rates and employment rates. They thought they might have heard of these things but were not sure. When asked if they had concerns about graduation rate (or conversely, did they feel that a lot of students left the program) - the students did not have any. They felt that the few students they knew that did leave the program were those that were not a good fit and/or serious about their academics. As for employment, while they were all anxious about employment post-graduation (normal for students at any program at any college), they were quick to discuss jobs that are sent around via email and knew of graduates and the jobs they had received. (See recommendations)

On a final note, the reviewers were impressed with the quality of discussion with the students. They were clearly engaged, motivated, and articulate. They were also very positive in their discussion of their experiences with the program and the extent to which they were learning from the Faculty. In addition, they specifically brought up—on their own—the extent to which they admired the two full-time faculty members for their dedication to student learning as well as their own dedication to their own ongoing person growth and development. This is something to be commended.
II. Meeting with Equine program faculty – FT and adjunct

The Two Full time faculty were joined by two part time faculty and the college recruitment officer.

Discussion included the courses taught along with background/credentials (well matched) as well as recruitment and retention of adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty salary levels appears appropriate for nature of the college and program and there is no indication that the salary rate is a problem in terms of adjunct recruitment (3 cr hour class – $890 per cr hour for a bachelor and $1000 for a master and doctorate; overload is 141 per students per credit). However, there is a concern with being able to consistently find qualified faculty in the area when openings occur.

The load of full time faculty was discussed and it was shared that there had been recent changes to load requirements. The newly instituted load of 12 credit hours a semester appears high given the additional responsibilities including administrative oversight of program, equine facilities and related programming, as well as student recruitment. While it sounded as if, on the surface, the 12cr hour teaching semester load was equitable among faculty, it seemed likely that a full understanding of the 'over and above' responsibilities of the equine faculty was not present among administration and was not calculated into a determination of equitable load. (See recommendations).

There was a discussion of the challenges of a unique program involved with large animals at an institution in which no other animal based programs exist (note that this scenario is not uncommon in undergraduate equine offerings across the US). This may relate to the questions of equitability of faculty responsibilities/load.

Discussion of program recruitment enhancements was possible due to presence of a new hire responsible for overseeing the process at the College (for all programs). Attention to recruitment for equine is particularly important as these programs can draw students from a larger geographic and financial base than typical two-year program offerings. While the program faculty are largely responsible for recruiting their own students, the new college recruiting initiatives are positioned to bring in larger numbers of students. A positive working relationship appears to be present between the faculty and the admission recruitment officer; all indications are that this is positioned well for growth. NOTE: Equine programs require targeted marketing initiatives to reach prospective students. Involvement in industry activities that afford opportunities for college booth displays is highly encouraged (Equine Affair, etc.). While there are costs associated with this, the marketing and promotional payoff is high and includes attracting students from larger demographic, psychographic, and geographic backgrounds. In addition, industry networking at events such as this increases program visibility and increases chances for equipment donation as well as internship and job placement. There appeared to be some confusion over whether or not a budget line item for support of these events had been removed; later discussion with the Dean indicated that the line item had been moved to Marketing (part of budget streamlining) but had not been 'removed'. Equine faculty can still access these funds through submission of a request to that department.

An area of need was identified in terms of data for use in recruitment and decision making. Best practices would include developing consistent mechanisms to share information about students who inquire, visit, apply, contract, and enroll in order to determine conversation rates and areas of impact to improve conversion (interest – enroll). Since this data has not been regularly documented by the
college (this is typically not a department function but rather a college function), improvement in this area should produce positive results (see recommendations). The equine department is fortunate to have a former, extremely knowledgeable admission officer on the adjunct teaching staff. He appears willing and eager to assist the College in this process.

The program does have an advisory board that meets on an annual basis. Use of the board is moving from information sharing to a more active process of seeking input and advice. This is a positive move and has provided assistance in development of a new online curriculum as well as changes to the existing programs. There are other areas the board could be involved in such as fundraising (see recommendations).

Riding and Training classes were an area identified by students and subsequently discussed with faculty. The horse: student ratio is in line with industry standards (approx. 2:1 ratio). However, the number of students in riding classes appears large (10) and it is a concern that riding lessons are not fully delineated by rider skill. While there is a ‘beginner’ and ‘advanced’ class there are many riding levels between. Safety and learning outcomes need to be considered more fully given this scenario (see recommendations). Further discussion of this topic revealed that the limitation on riding classes appears to have a relationship to consistent availability of riding spaces given seasonal limitations to outdoor riding areas with poor drainage (see recommendations).

Discussion of the equine facility budget brought to light the organization of the facility reporting to Animal Care and Control. This is an unusual reporting structure but it appears to work for the department (although this seems to be more a result of strong positive relationships than the mechanics of the actual organization). Another area that was discussed was the elimination of a staff line. Later discussions with the Dean indicated that the staff line could be reinstated or reconfigured to satisfy a need for a position that might provide more benefit to the facility operations (see recommendations).

A review of the ‘expense reduction and income improvement proposal’ finds very positive suggestions and excellent direction for improvements in both areas. The faculty should be commended for this forward thinking and planning. There are numerous good ideas with ample enthusiasm to carry them forward. One concern is the limitation of human resources to effectively implement all the ideas. (See recommendations)

On the side of revenue enhancement, the faculty shared that funds had been secured to build another outdoor arena with appropriate footing for year-round usage. However, the reviewers learned that the project had been placed on hold because there was uncertainty about the future of the equine program including 1) whether it would continue at the college and 2) would continue in the current location or move to a smaller plot of land closer to the main campus. The lack of uncertainty was a clear point of concern with the faculty. However, upon meeting with the Dean there seemed to be less a question of whether or not the program would continue and more of a question about where it would be housed long term. (See recommendations)

On a final note, the reviewers were impressed with the strong sense of collegiality and high level of dedication among the full and part-time faculty. It is clear that the Program Director’s approach to information sharing/transparency and team building has had a very positive impact on the program.
III. Meeting with other College faculty

An opportunity to meet with faculty from other areas across the College was included in the day's agenda. The discussion was extremely positive with faculty discussing their sense of a strong, motivated group of equine students.

The faculty discussed their recognition of the uniqueness of the program and felt it represented a good niche market for careers and was geographically well-suited to the area.

The reviewers asked if there was concern about the high costs of the program and the faculty were quick to respond that this was a 'point of pride' program with considerable benefit. They also discussed the extent to which they had first-hand knowledge of students who had come from out-of-state to the program when this was highly unusual for other programs at the College.

Given student perceptions about the 'invisibility' of the program to on-campus constituents, this observation was explored with the faculty. Their impression was that the on-campus population was well aware of the program particularly because it was selected as a 'Point of Pride' program and that the Program Director offered some information about the program and student activities and awards at just about every faculty meeting. They also shared that program information is also often disseminated through campus and system email announcements and newsletters.

Learning outcomes were discussed with the faculty to gauge the level by which this has been a topic embraced by the full college community. The reviewer’s impression was that the college was in the initial stages of emphasizing the development of more formal learning outcomes assessment and curriculum mapping.

IV. Meeting with the Dean

Discussion with the Dean centered on the institutional perspective of the program and clarifying some questions that surfaced in earlier sessions.

- Visibility of the Program on Campus – response: Highly visible
- Dedication of Faculty – response: Highly dedicated
- Faculty Teaching Load – response: Teaching loads had been changed to be more in-line with faculty loads across campus. However, the reviewers shared that a look at the ‘over and above’ responsibilities of the program faculty might provide a clearer measure of true equity. Further into the discussion, the Dean indicated that it might be possible to reallocate funds to cover an administrative assistant position (see recommendations).
- Plans for Program Longevity – the Dean was very positive in her impression of future plans for the program. It appears that the emphasis on budget reduction and income generation is simply a function of the overall college environment rather than a plan to eliminate the program based on costs. NOTE: small colleges across the country are wrestling with similar scenarios and the expense reduction plans laid out by program faculty are responsible initiatives.
- Plans for Facility Location/Improvement - The Dean discussed the potential for movement of the equine operations to a plot of land closer to the campus. While a closer location could provide greater visibility, there are concerns regarding smaller land size (limited growth opportunities) as
well as the extent to which building a new set of buildings and rings is feasible without a considerable influx of additional funds. (See recommendations).

V. Tour of the Facility.

The reviewers walked the site and visited the various buildings, riding rings, and pastures. The overall scope of the facility is impressive with ample opportunities for programmatic expansion. This is a true strength of the facility.

There were, however, problematic areas stemming primarily from poor original construction and design. The program faculty have done a remarkable job determining the best use for the various areas as well as how to consolidate for efficiency.

The poor drainage in the fenced pastures was highly apparent on this visit – however it is the rainy season and it is unclear how often this is a significant problem in the paddocks.

The poor draining of the outdoor riding spaces is problematic because it limits the usefulness of the areas and riding/handling classes have to be scheduled accordingly. This reduces the amount of hands-on classes and also, therefore, reduced revenue generating activities. (See recommendations).

The horses were in excellent condition and were all well-mannered indicating a healthy housing environment. Food storage was excellent as was facility signage. Evidence of care to equine safety and welfare was amply present.

Arena footing was appropriate although it appeared to be close to replacement time. The Program Director indicated that this was in the plans.

The therapeutic riding area was a highpoint of the facility. Well organized, visually appealing, and clearly a point of pride. While the office location in the back is less than ideal, a clear set of plans was in place to overcome the challenges. Footing was excellent in the aisle ways, signage was appropriate, safety measures/first aid protocols were clearly identified.

The welcome facility with office and classrooms was clean, orderly, and functional. When completed, the large open space has the potential to be a revenue generating space for functions, events, and seminars.

The overall impression of the facility is that it is has the capacity for enrollment growth as well as housing additional revenue generating activities.
NAEAA Specific Program Review Areas:

IOE Construct 1: Knowledge

Identify the process by which each knowledge area is taught and learning is assessed. When possible, gather syllabi and examples of outcomes assessment tools.

Area 1 – Equine care.

1. Ability to identify indicators of poor health
   a. Where taught: discussed several classes with basic horse care being the common required course in equine health care. Students also discussed extensive involvement in day to day care of horses along with working with the veterinarian.
   b. Method(s) of assessment: written exams and lab based practicums – including pre/post tests
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

2. Ability to apply nutrition knowledge real world settings
   a. Where taught: equine nutrition course and working with the veterinarian who does BCS score every two months;
   b. Method(s) of assessment: written exams and lab practicums
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

3. Ability to identify indicators of good health
   a. Where taught: same as 1
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

4. Working knowledge of horse nutrition
   a. Where taught: same as 2
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

5. Ability to identify indicators of abnormal behavior
   a. Where taught: basic horse handling – first term fall course also includes behavior and also discussed in riding classes
   b. Method(s) of assessment: exams and instructor observations of skills
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

6. Working knowledge of horse anatomy
   a. Where taught: equine chiropractor teaches the course
   b. Method(s) of assessment: exams and practicums including pre/post-tests.
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

7. Ability to apply anatomy knowledge to real world settings
   a. Where taught: Did not cover in questions
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

8. Difference between incoming and exiting knowledge regarding horses
   a. Method(s) of assessment: pre and post-tests in equine classes.
   b. Results of assessment: unknown
Area 2 – Critical Thinking

1. Students can read and interpret information that is useful for decision making
   a. Where taught: Students listed many of places where this is covered and emphasized the program’s use of self-assessment for decision making along with use of self-assessment for goal setting. Mentioned a ‘goal tree’ exercise.
   b. Method(s) of assessment: Written assignments
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

2. Students are able to find and use information that is seen as trusted and relevant
   a. Where taught: within class assignments that require them to do industry networking, industry research, and literary research.
   b. Method(s) of assessment: assignments
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

3. Students can find information that is useful for decision making
   a. Where taught: Asset mapping exercise was mentioned, emphasis on encouraging/requiring students to focus on the ‘big picture’ and look for additional information and learning opportunities. Discussed the extent to which faculty refer students to additional books, videos, articles, and encourage them to look at, get applications for jobs to ‘get them out’, read/reflect and draw out key points.
   b. Method(s) of assessment: Assignments. For some areas it sounded like grading rubrics were provided and in other areas they weren’t – particularly for papers. That is an area that could be strengthened (see recommendations)
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

Area 3 – Equine Skills

1. Comprehensive knowledge of basic horse health care
   a. Where taught: required intro class covers basics. Other classes that were required in some tracks had advanced discussions.
   b. Method(s) of assessment: pre-test before classes, post-tests including written and practicums
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

2. Ability to apply best practices to horse care
   a. Where taught: same as 1
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment: unknown
3. Demonstration of responsible care toward horse welfare
   a. Where taught: students were at first unsure and then felt that it was discussed in bits and pieces in the curriculum. Upon reflection, students shared they thought a class on this would be good and or a larger dedication to this in an existing class. This would be useful to explore particularly given increasing public discussion and scrutiny on equine welfare. (see recommendations)
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

Area 4 - Other areas that could be considered (but not seen as highly important to ALL equine curriculums)

- Student knowledge of Diversity and Global Awareness
  o Students did not think that diversity and global awareness was covered within the curriculum other than perhaps some discussion of how big the industry is. Students in the therapeutic area felt that there was some more discussion in their courses. Students also indicated that they covered this in other general education course requirements outside of equine.

**NOTE:** Both full-time and part-time faculty provided example syllabi for courses covering a range of topics. The syllabi were well organized with appropriate level of detail. Course texts were appropriate. Learning outcomes, assignments, assessment and expectations were appropriate as well. Use of pre and post assessment measures were stated which aligned with student comments. The use of pre and post -tests if a particularly strong component of the course syllabi and should provide the department with longitudinal data for tracking outcomes assessment.

**IOE Construct 2: Skills**

Area 1: Student communication skills

1. Competence in oral communication
   a. Where taught: group and individual projects in equine courses; all college courses - students felt there was quite a bit of this
   b. Method(s) of assessment: students were given rubrics of what was expected and then that was used to provide feedback and grades
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

2. Competence in written communication
   a. Where taught: students felt there was a strong emphasis on written work. While more assignments seemed to be reflective writing, students reported a solid emphasis on formatted research based assignments.
   b. Method(s) of assessment: papers returned with comments and grades; rubric not used. A suggestion is to develop rubrics for writing assignments for expectations as well as assessment.
   c. Results of assessment: unknown
3. Competence in listening skills
   a. Where taught: Unable to identify – may want to incorporate some listening skills discussion and learning activities
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

4. Ability to communicate positively with industry professionals
   a. Where taught: students discussed a class that required mock interviews. Some had experiences with recruiting opportunities and serving as program ambassadors. This was an area that seemed like improvements could be made with more industry speakers and discussions of expectations of attire, body language, communication, etc. (see recommendations)
   b. Method(s) of assessment: informal
   c. Results of assessment: unknown

5. Ability to appropriately use industry terminology
   a. Where taught: Embedded in coursework
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

6. Ability to communicate positively with faculty
   a. Where taught: did not discuss with students or faculty
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

7. Ability to communicate positively with classmates
   a. Where taught: Students were not sure that this was formally embedded in program curriculum. This may be something to consider adding (team work and conflict resolution along with storming, forming, norming, performing etc.) (see recommendations)
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:

Area 2: Student grasp of life skills

1. Use of ethical decision-making skills
   a. Where taught: Not formally addressed but informally emphasized.
   b. Method(s) of assessment:
   c. Results of assessment:
IOE Construct 3: Trajectory of Graduates from the discipline

Area 1: Employer Feedback

✓ Yes/No – is there a formal process of employer feedback?
  o No
✓ Yes/No – is there an informal process of employer feedback?
  o Yes. Faculty report that they have discussions with employers of their graduates.

1. Satisfaction with graduates they employ
   a. Method(s) of assessment: discussion with employers
   b. Results of assessment: unknown

2. Employment rate of graduates
   a. Method(s) of assessment: not currently tracked (see recommendations)
   b. Results of assessment:

3. Employment rates of graduates within their field of study
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Data is not currently tracked. However, the department receives information on job openings and this is emailed to students. The department recognizes that this is an area of weakness. However, it should be noted that this is not an uncommon weakness across colleges and across all kinds of academic departments. Nonetheless, this is a weakness that should be addressed. (see recommendations)
   b. Results of assessment:

Area 2: Internship site feedback (if internships are part of the program)

✓ Yes/No – are internships required in this program? Required in some of the tracks.
✓ Yes/No – are internships elective in this program? Yes there are elective internships. (See recommendations regarding Federal Guidelines for paid/unpaid college internships).

1. Satisfaction of students with internship site placement
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Students complete evaluation forms both during and at the end of their internships.
   b. Results of assessment: Faculty report that students typically indicate that they learn a lot and some students have been hired on into full time positions as a result of their internship.

2. Satisfaction of internship sites with student performance
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Supervisor evaluation forms are complete both during the internship site and upon completion.
   b. Results of assessment: Faculty report that feedback has been favorable.

3. Extent to which industry seeks interns from your program
a. Method(s) of assessment: Faculty report that students and faculty typically seek out internships. On occasion, sites have reached out to request interns.

**Construct 4: Reputation**

**Area 1: Reputation of Faculty within the program:**

**Full Time Faculty:**

1. Appropriate educational and professional background
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Review of resumes and teaching performance
   b. Results of assessment: Backgrounds are appropriate.
2. Faculty coverage (student/faculty ratio)
   a. Method(s) of assessment: determination of ideal class size for hands/on and lecture courses.
   b. Results of assessment: Some riding classes are too big; room in most lecture classes for more students
3. Retention of Faculty
   a. Method(s) of assessment: length of connection with college
   b. Results of assessment: appearance of strong retention among current full and part time faculty
4. Faculty connection with Industry
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Review of resumes documenting industry connection
   b. Results of assessment: Strong attention to developing and maintaining industry connections. This is very strong in the program.
5. Perception of faculty reputation within industry
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Both full time faculty have been invited to serve on regional and national groups and boards. Program Director has been invited to be a peer reviewer as well as a consultant for therapeutic riding programs.
   b. Results of assessment: Review of resumes and discussion with OSU faculty – all positive.

**Part-Time Faculty**

6. Appropriate educational and professional background
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Review of resumes, meeting with OSU adjuncts
   b. Results of assessment: appropriate backgrounds for positions held
7. Retention of part-time faculty
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Discussion with faculty
   b. Results of assessment: retention is positive

**Area 2: Reputation of safety and welfare standards for students and horses**

1. Safety standards and procedures align with good animal welfare
Area 3: Reputation of program within equine industry

1. Industry perception of students enrolling and graduating from program
   a. Method(s) of assessment: discussion with faculty and students
   b. Results of assessment: verbal 'soft' data is present but development of a method of tracking and feedback is recommended. (see recommendations)

2. Of Graduates from your program: - Same as 1

3. Of Program within comparable undergraduate offerings: Not discussed during site review.

Construct 5: Sustainability of program at the institution

1. Safety of teaching and learning facilities
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Visual inspection
   b. Results of assessment: Safety planning is present throughout the facility. There is a concern with safety in terms of riding/handling class size as well as separation of student by riding/handling level. Safety of students and horses is also a concern in facility areas with poor drainage.

2. Number of students graduating from program
   a. Method(s) of assessment: College records.
   b. Results of assessment: Data documents varying trends from years of very low graduation to areas of stronger graduate rates (actual rates were not shared). Two problems that the program encounters should be addressed (and steps appear to already be in process to do so) 1) students will be 1-2 classes short of degree completion and accept industry jobs; 2) students fail to complete paperwork to earn the degree even after completing all the coursework. (See recommendations)
3. Number of students applying to program  
   a. Method(s) of assessment: data has not been regularly gathered by the college  
   b. Results of assessment: 

4. Financial support of college for program  
   a. Method(s) of assessment: Review of budget and discussion with Faculty and Dean  
   b. Results of assessment: Budgetary allocations appear to be within an appropriate range for animal care and adjunct salaries. Budget cuts have been made recently and cost saving measures have been employed. A plan for additional budget reductions and revenue generation has been presented. The one area that is noteworthy is lack of administrative assistance for the extensive facility programming. This is also seen as an impediment for the potential of additional revenue generating activities. (See recommendations)  

5. Number of students accepted to program  
   a. Method(s) of assessment: College has not regularly collected/share this data  
   b. Results of assessment: 

6. Number of students attending program  
   a. Method(s) of assessment: reported college data.  
   b. Results of assessment: data indicated variability in enrollment patterns. More consistent efforts at recruitment and student tracking to enrollment should be implemented.  

7. Retention rate from 1st semester to point of graduation  
   a. Method(s) of assessment: data not provided  
   b. Results of assessment: 

8. Quality of students graduating  
   a. Method(s) of assessment: not discussed during site visit  
   b. Results of assessment: 

• Yes/No – Does this program utilize the NAEAA incoming student survey  
  o Yes  
• Yes/No – Does this program utilize the NAEAA graduating student survey  
  o Yes
To: Program Reviewers

External Reviewers:
Dr. Karin D. Bump, Professor of Equine Studies, Cazenovia College and National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics (NAEAA)
Timothy Williams, Visiting Instructor, Cazenovia College and National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics (NAEAA)

Internal Reviewers:
Dr. Vicky Parker, Associated Professor, Ohio University Chillicothe
Dr. Barbara Trube, Professor, Ohio University Chillicothe

From:
Kelly Hall, Director of Equine Studies, Ohio University Southern

Thank you for your time and attention to detail in reviewing our program. The Equine Studies program is undergoing a period of change and growth. Your experience and expertise has provided helpful feedback and guidance in moving our program forward to meet the changing needs of the modern equine industry.

We found your input insightful and supportive of our ideas and plans for further development of our program. It is our goal to implement suggested changes and improve our program.

Comments on each point have been made within the body of the review.

Sincerely,

Nicole Pennington
Dean

Kelly Hall
Director of Equine Studies