Restructured Academic Program Review Process – Part I

The UCC review process can serve two, intertwined, purposes: satisfying OBOR and NCA requirements for the accreditation of programs and providing information for planning units to conduct strategic planning. It is necessary for reviews to be completed in a timely manner so as to insure that 1) the UCC may determine the viability of a program based on current information and 2) that the Department, College and University have current information in making planning decisions. In the recent past, there have been significant delays in the timely completion of reviews. The proposed restructuring of the review process is part of a larger effort to reduce the burden of preparing reviews, reviewing programs, and insuring that reviews are completed in a timely manner.

The proposed restructuring of review process will:

- Insure the process be completed in a timely manner: 15 months from start to finish.
- Provide sufficient information for the UCC to determine whether a program is viable, in jeopardy, or should be referred to the UCC Program Committee.
- Convey any commendations or concerns that may affect a programs future viability.
- Be integrated into a strategic planning process and provide both a history of the program’s recent past and sufficient detail to serve for future planning.

Significant differences between the current and proposed practice include:

- The internal and external reviewers will prepare a joint site visit report at the time of the site visit and have an exit interview with each of the Dean (or his/her designee) and Provost (or his/her designee, e.g., Executive Dean for Regional Campuses.)
- The site visit report will be made available to the Chair, Dean and Provost immediately after the site visit. The site visit report, in conjunction with the self-study, will be immediately available for discussion by the planning units.
- Built in deadlines for responses to the site visit report. If there is no response prior to the deadline, this is a tacit indication that there are no concerns with the site visit report and the report will proceed to the next stage in the process.

Preparing a report at the time of the site visit will remove what has been a significant delay in the current process. Having the self-study and site visit report available prior to the UCC’s decision regarding program viability will allow the planning units to make timely use of the detailed information available in these reports.
Items for approval

1. Self studies will be due September 15th. Programs not completing self-studies by the
deadline will have all UCC business tabled until the self-study has been submitted.
Accreditation reports will be incorporated into the self-study to the extent possible.
2. The internal and external reviewers will prepare a joint site visit report at the time of
the site visit and have exit interviews with the Dean (or his/her designee) and Provost
(or his/her designee). The review team will consist of two internal reviewers and, in
most cases, an external reviewer. (Associate degree programs and some Regional
Higher Education programs may be reviewed solely by internal reviewers.)
3. The site visit report will be sent to the Chair, Dean and Provost immediately after the
site visit.
4. The Chair and Dean will send their responses to the UCC within two weeks of receiving
the site visit report. If there is no response within two weeks, it will be assumed that
there are no concerns with the report and the report will proceed to the next stage.
5. The following proposed timeline be implemented:
   
a. Self-study and external reviewer(s): 1) Departments will be informed of pending
   review during March of the year prior to the review, 2) external reviewer(s) are
   selected prior to July 30th, and 3) self studies will be due on or prior to
   September 15th.
b. Site Visit scheduled to occur in fall or prior to February 15. The site visit report
   will be made available to the Department Chair, Dean, UCC Academic Program
   Review Committee, Graduate Council, and the Provost as soon as it is available.
c. It is strongly suggested that the Chair, Dean and Provost (or designee, e.g.,
   Executive Dean for Regional Campuses) meet to discuss the self-study and site
   visit report. These discussions should occur within 6 weeks of the site visit.
d. The Chair and Dean will send their responses to the UCC within two weeks of
   receiving the site visit report. If there is no response within two weeks, it will be
   assumed that there are no concerns with the report and the report will proceed
to the next stage.
e. The Chair’s response and Dean’s response are sent to Graduate Council.
   Graduate Council will respond to the report no later than two regular meeting
   after receiving the report and responses from the Chair and Dean. If there is no
   response following two regular meetings, the report will proceed to the next
   stage.
f. During winter or spring term, the Academic Program Review Committee
discusses the site visit report and responses and arrives at a recommendation to
the UCC. The Program Review Committee recommendation and supporting
materials are sent to the UCC for approval.
g. During the spring term, the site report, responses, and UCC decision are sent to
the Board of Trustees as an informational item.