

UCC Program Review Committee Summary of Review

Home Department: University College

Program Review: Technical and Applied Studies (BTAS)

Date of last review: AY 2019-2020

Date of this review: AY 2023-2024

Recommendation: This program is found to be viable.

See report for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

The report was forwarded to the program director and college dean.

Follow-Up Review of Bachelors in Technical and Applied Studies

January 24, 2024

Introduction

On January 23rd, 2024, a review team met with representatives from the Bachelors in Technical and Applied Sciences program as a follow up to a previous review which was held on October 24th, 2019. The team held online meetings with the program coordinator, the Dean, other members of the faculty, the support staff, and a group of current students. Lauren McMills (Chemistry and Biochemistry) and Justin Daering (Film) served as the internal reviewers.

At the conclusion of the previous review, findings and concerns were organized into six categories, *Staffing, Recruitment and Advising, Program Coordinator, Online Delivery and Course Size, Resources, and Other*. This report is organized in that same way.

Findings

Staffing: Since the original review, staffing has increased from 1 FTE to 3 FTE. The curriculum has also been updated to fit a carousel model. Instead of teaching 10 classes each semester, three courses are now taught every semester with the others split between fall and spring. This model appears to be working well for the program, and to have alleviated staffing issues, as well as balanced enrollment levels. The increased number of faculty should allow for a more balanced teaching load, with time for research/scholarship and service. This may also potentially provide an opportunity for some amount of summer course offerings, which students expressed a desire for.

Recruitment and Advising: The transition from faculty advisors to student success advisors and faculty mentors appears to have resolved many of the problems that were noted during the previous review. Both students and advisors reported positive advising experiences since the new system was installed. Some students confirmed the previous report's findings, that in past years student advisors were changing too frequently, but the reorganization under One Ohio appears to have resolved these concerns. Student success advisors appear knowledgeable about the program. Advisors indicate they

will sometimes speak with potential students about the program, and in those meetings, the name of the degree presents a moderate obstacle as it is counter-intuitive to the content of the program.

Since the previous review, the faculty and the marketing team have met. New marketing materials have been created, and resources have been allotted to raise awareness of the program. One of the interviewed students reported finding the program through an advertisement on Google or Facebook. Students agree the name of the program should be changed to better reflect the content of the courses.

Program Coordinator: Some discrepancies were noticed between the program coordinator's understanding, and the Dean's understanding, of the ways in which concerns from the previous review had or had not been addressed. In particular, the concerns regarding budgeting for the program, and concerns regarding faculty and marketing team interactions, appear to be places where increased communication and clarity between parties could resolve remaining concerns.

Online Deliverables and Course Size: Over the last two years, the BTAS courses that were updated to satisfy BRICKS requirements have experienced increased enrollment. The addition of the BRICKS components to their courses appears to have been a successful enrollment driver. Additionally, the implementation of the certificate program also appears to be positively impacting course enrollment. The largest courses now accommodate 35 students. This has required some change in instruction/assignments to maintain balanced workload, but faculty report these assignment changes have either maintained or improved education outcomes.

Resources (Instructional): During the review, no issues concerning instructional resources were brought up by any stakeholders. Any concerns with resources from the previous review appear to have been resolved.

Other: Concerns regarding Assessment have not progressed since the previous review. Assessment practices and procedures still need to be improved and implemented. The program coordinator indicated the intent to simplify the current assessment plan and to create new rubrics for assessment and data aggregation.

The program coordinator has proposed a Curricular Advisory Committee/Community Leadership Committee. The review team recognizes the merit in a committee of community business leaders to advise on workforce development. The team recommends the drafting of a proposal for funding needs to facilitate regular meetings with this group.

Conclusion

The Bachelors of Technical and Applied Studies continues to be a viable program. Many of the concerns reviewers noted in 2019 have been addressed, and new/remaining concerns are shared by faculty, Dean, and support staff, with intentions to address. Students speak highly of the program and report their enrollment in the program directly benefitting their professional lives and careers.

Two items arose as areas for continued consideration during this review. First and most significantly a name change for the degree was generally recognized as necessary. Students expressed concern over having to explain to hiring managers what the program was, and advisors expressed similar concerns in having to clarify it to students. Secondly, the potential for some summer course offerings, if only one or two courses, seemed to have high interest from both students and advisors, and should warrant further consideration.

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Lijing Yang, Program Review Committee Chair
From: Dr. Donna L. Burgraff, Associate Professor, Program Director
Date: February 9, 2024
Re: BTAS Faculty Response to Program Review 2024

The faculty of the Bachelor of Technical and Applied Studies (BTAS) major concur with the findings of the 2023-2024 Program Review. We appreciate the hard work of the reviewers Lauren McMills and Justin Daering.

We found the overall review highly positive. We commit to working more closely with the Dean of University College on the areas of concern identified:

- Assessment
- Communication
- Budgeting
- Marketing
- Name Change

To start we will add these items to the faculty meetings agenda, ask the department chair to add these items to the dean/chair meeting agenda, and ask the dean to add these items to the program coordinators/dean agenda.

We request that the dean also make these items a priority and commit to addressing them with us.

Each May, the program coordinator will write a report to the faculty and dean outlining what progress has been made in each of these areas.

We are well pleased that our degree was so well received and highly thought of.

CC: Dr. David Nguyen, Dean of University College
Dr. Jim Smith, Associate Professor in University College
Prof. Allison White, Associate Professor in University College

Technical and Applied Sciences Review Response

March 5, 2024

From: David J. Nguyen, Dean of University College

Dear Dr. Yang,

Thank you to the internal reviewers for taking the time to review the updates to the Bachelor of Technical and Applied Studies (BTAS) program.

As evidenced by the reviewers and the response from Dr. Donna Burgraff, there is much to be proud of with respect to the BTAS program. Since the initial review in 2019, the BTAS program faculty have sought ways to balance workloads and courses. In particular, the faculty took on the task of making their courses more BRICKS (general education) friendly, which has increased their course enrollments. The outreach that BTAS program faculty have been conducting with Success Advisors around campus to create awareness for the shifts in program curriculum to support student learning.

With respect for areas to development, I will work more closely with the BTAS Program Coordinator to set a program-level budget and will work closely to develop a plan for assessment. Assessment is essential work that needs to be completed and together, we can establish an achievable plan. As we have done in prior years, I will work to connect the BTAS faculty with individuals to have discussions with about a new program name. Lastly, there are potential options for summer course options. These can be considered alongside the need and demand by students.

Overall, I am pleased with the direction of the BTAS program and look forward to working with them as we continue to evolve this program.

Sincerely,
David J. Nguyen, Ph.D.
Dean, University College