

William Paterson University
Program Review Handbook

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Program Review Handbook

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OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

On a rotating basis over a 5-6 year period, each academic program at William Paterson University undergoes program review and/or accreditation self study. This process provides an opportunity for departments to reflect on all aspects of their program within the context of the changing needs of students and society, the changing nature of academic disciplines and changes at our university.

Usually, all programs within a department are reviewed simultaneously. Through this assessment process, department and program strengths, areas needing attention, and opportunities for future growth and development are identified. Based on the results of program review, departments develop plans to guide their efforts over the next five years. Progress in implementing these plans is reported annually in the Department's year-end report. The major steps in the program review process are:

- 1. Preparation for Self-Study.** Departments review their mission statement, student learning outcomes, course outlines, and assessment plans (see Assessment Resources on pp. 22-33) and revise them, if needed. Departments also decide how they will organize their self-study and provide a brief written summary of the process to their Dean, along with their mission statement and student learning outcomes.
- 2. Self-Study.** Departments prepare a self-study document following the Self-Study Outline in this handbook (pp. 11-21). The self-study should be a collaborative effort and should involve most members of the Department. It is recommended that students and alumni also be invited to participate.
- 3. Selection of External Reviewer.** Departments nominate three individuals to serve as reviewers for their programs (see pp. 37-39 for information on program review consultants). The Dean, in collaboration with the Provost's Office, selects one of the nominees to serve as reviewer.
- 4. Administrative Review.** Prior to making final arrangements for the visit of the external reviewer, copies of the completed self-study report and assessment plan are submitted to the Dean for review. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the self-study report and the assessment plan are thorough and follow the self-study guidelines. If the report and/or plan do not meet these criteria, they are returned to the Department for revision.
- 5. External Review.** The completed self-study document, along with the Department's assessment plan and other documents are provided to the external reviewer or to the appropriate accrediting body. The external reviewer or representative of the accrediting body visits the campus to meet with faculty, students and the Dean and view the facilities first hand. Based on the self-study report and the site visit, the external reviewer prepares a report outlining strengths as well as areas in need of attention. This report is submitted to the Dean who shares it with the Department and the Provost.

6. **Agreement on Future Directions.** Using the results of the self-study and external reviewer's report, the Department develops a five-year plan that details its future direction, and the activities, time lines and resource requirements to achieve its desired goals. This plan is reviewed by the Dean and Provost, and, if necessary, revised. When the plan has been finalized, a memorandum of understanding between the Department, Dean and Provost indicates mutual agreement to the plan.
7. **Planning, Implementation and Progress Reports.** Progress in implementing the Department's plan is reported each year in the Department's annual report. During the third year of implementation, members of the Department review the Plan and modify it, if needed, to reflect current realities.

A checklist of program review activities on the next page will assist departments in tracking program review activities.

PROGRAM REVIEW CHECKLIST

Please use the following checklist to assist you in keeping track of the activities in the program review process. The dates shown are those recommended in the PR Calendar. These may vary somewhat depending on specific circumstances.

<u>When?</u>	<u>Activity/Event</u>	<u>X=</u> <u>Completed</u>
<u>Spring Prior to PR</u>	<u>Review mission statement, student learning outcomes (SLO's), course outlines, and assessment plans and revise, if needed</u>	
	<u>Organize self-study process and submit to Dean a description of the process along with mission statement and SLO's</u>	
<u>YEAR 1</u>		
<u>Sept.-Jan.</u>	<u>Prepare self-study (SS) document</u>	
<u>February</u>	<u>Submit SS draft to Dean along with assessment plan</u>	
<u>February</u>	<u>Submit recommendations of 3 external reviewers to Dean and Provost (see guidelines and nomination form on pp. 37-39)</u>	
<u>April</u>	<u>Finalize SS document, including title page with names of faculty contributing to its preparation, and make needed number of copies</u>	
	<u>Submit final SS document to Dean, Provost and OPRE</u>	
<u>May-June</u>	<u>Assemble the following documents for external reviewer:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Updated assessment plan</u> • <u>Updated faculty vitae</u> • <u>Updated course outlines (or Web URL)</u> • <u>Relevant catalogs</u> • <u>Fact Book</u> 	
	<u>Set date for visit of external reviewer in September or October.</u>	
<u>Summer</u>	<u>Complete travel arrangements for reviewer</u> <u>Mail SS report and accompanying documents</u>	
<u>YEAR 2</u>		
<u>Sept.-Oct.</u>	<u>Set up schedule for reviewer's campus visit</u>	
	<u>Campus visit completed by October 15</u>	
<u>Oct.-Nov.</u>	<u>External reviewer's report received by November 15</u>	
<u>Nov.-Jan.</u>	<u>Department drafts response to reviewer's report and proposes future directions and resource needs</u>	
	<u>Department representatives meet with Dean to discuss and reach agreement on directions and resource needs</u>	

	<u>Department representatives and Dean meet with Provost to discuss proposed directions and resource needs</u>	
<u>March-April</u>	<u>Based on results of meeting with Provost and Dean, Department develops 5-year plan</u>	
<u>April-May</u>	<u>Department Plan is finalized after input from Dean and Provost and Memorandum of Understanding indicates mutual agreement to Plan</u>	
<u>YEAR 3</u>		
<u>Sept.-May</u>	<u>Implement Five-Year Plan (Year 1) and Assessment Plan</u>	
<u>June</u>	<u>In Year-End Report, report on progress in implementing plans</u>	
<u>YEAR 4</u>		
<u>Sept.-May</u>	<u>Implement Five-Year Plan (Year 2) and Assessment Plan</u>	
<u>June</u>	<u>In Year-End Report, report on progress in implementing plans</u>	
<u>YEAR 5</u>		
<u>Sept.-May</u>	<u>Implement Five-Year Plan (Year 3) and Assessment Plan. In spring, review plans and, if needed, revise to reflect current realities</u>	
<u>June</u>	<u>In Year-End Report, report on progress in implementing plans and append revised plans, if appropriate</u>	
<u>YEAR 6</u>		
<u>Sept.-May</u>	<u>Implement Five-Year Plan (Year 4) and Assessment Plan</u>	
<u>June</u>	<u>In Year-End Report, report on progress in implementing plans</u>	
<u>YEAR 7</u>		
<u>Sept.-May</u>	<u>Implement Five-Year Plan (Year 5) and Assessment Plan</u>	
<u>April-May</u>	<u>Prepare for next cycle of program review</u>	
<u>June</u>	<u>In Year-End Report, report on progress in implementing plans</u>	

PROGRAM REVIEW CALENDAR

Preparation for Program Review

April. Department is notified that it will be undergoing program review. Department Chair and two other members attend an orientation seminar to learn about the program review process. This seminar is offered by the Provost's Office in collaboration with the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. College Assessment Coordinators and Associate Deans are also encouraged to attend.

May. Department reviews its mission statement, student learning outcomes, and assessment plan and revises them, if necessary. Department submits its mission statement and student learning outcomes to the Dean, along with a brief description of how it will conduct the self-study. The Office of Planning Research and Evaluation provides the Department with statistical information on its programs and department

Program Review Cycle

Year 1

September-January. Department prepares its self-study document according to the WPU Program Review Guidelines and Outline (pp. 11-21), and submits it, along with the names of three to five possible external reviewers, to the College Dean by February 1 (see guidelines and nomination form for external consultants on pages 37-39).

February-March. Dean reviews the Self-Study document for completeness and, if necessary, returns it to the Department for revision. The final self-study document is submitted to the Dean by April 1. During this time period, the Dean, in consultation with the Provost, selects an external reviewer or reviewers, and the Department updates and prepares the following documents that will be sent to the External Reviewer(s), along with the Self-Study:

- Updated faculty vitae
- Up-to-date course outlines
- Updated Department Assessment Plan, including assessment instruments.
- Relevant catalogs
- Fact Book

May. The date for the campus visit by External Reviewer(s) is established. Ideally this visit will take place in late September or early October of Year Two of the Review Process.

Summer. Travel arrangements are made for the Reviewer, and the Dean's Office mails the self-study, accompanying documents, and review guidelines to Reviewer(s).

Year 2

September-November. Final arrangements are made for the campus visit by the External Reviewer(s). Dean and Department collaborate on setting up schedule of campus visit. Typically the visit involves meetings with the following: Department Executive Committee, full-time faculty, untenured faculty, adjuncts, other staff, undergraduate students, graduate students (if appropriate), alumni, Dean, Associate Provost. Some departments may also find it helpful to involve the Library staff in the visit.

The campus visit by External Reviewer(s) is completed by October 15.

The external review report is mailed to the Dean no later than November 15. The Dean immediately distributes the report to the Department where it is distributed to all full-time faculty.

November-January

Department drafts a written response to the external review report, correcting factual errors or misperceptions, if any, and proposing future directions for the Department, resource needs and a possible time line for implementation. Department Executive Committee meets with the Dean to discuss the draft response and proposal.

Department incorporates suggestions from the Dean, as appropriate, and develops a final response and proposal. This document is sent to the Dean and Provost by January 31.

February

A meeting is held with the Department Executive Committee, the Dean and Provost to discuss the Department's Proposal and reach general agreement about future directions of the Department.

March-April

Based on what was learned in the Self-Study and from the External Reviewer, as well as the results of the meeting with the Provost and Dean, the Department prepares a five-year plan that details the future direction of the department, and the activities and time lines to achieve the desired goals. This plan is submitted to the Dean and Provost by April 15.

April-May

The Dean and Provost provide feedback on the Plan. If necessary, the Plan is modified and a final plan put in place by commencement. A memorandum of understanding between the Department, Dean and Provost indicates mutual agreement to the Plan.

Year 3

Department begins implementing its Five-Year Plan (year one), and reports on progress in implementing it in Department's year-end report.

Year 4

Department continues implementing its Five-Year Plan (year two) and reports on progress in its year-end report.

Year 5

Department continues implementing its Five-Year Plan (year three). During the spring semester, members of the Department collaboratively review the Plan, taking into consideration the progress made, as well as changes that have occurred in the Department, University, discipline, external environment, etc. that affect the original plan. The original plan is fine-tuned, if necessary, and submitted to the Dean and Provost for review, comment and approval. A report on progress in implementing the original plan and a copy of the revised plan is included in the Department's year-end report.

Year 6

Department continues implementing its Five-Year Plan (year four), including any revisions made at the end of the previous year, and reports on progress in implementing its revised plan. In March or April of Year 6, three members of the Department attend a Program Review orientation seminar sponsored by the Provost's Office and OPRE.

Year 7

Department continues implementing its Five-Year Plan (year five) and reports on progress in its Annual Report.

The second round of program reviews begins in September, repeating the activities described in Years 1 and 2, above.

SELF-STUDY GUIDELINES

All programs in the Department are usually reviewed simultaneously. Development of the self-study document should be a collaborative effort involving all members of the Department. Participation of students and alumni provides a perspective that is often helpful and therefore their participation is strongly encouraged.

Prior to their self-study, Departments review their mission statement, student learning outcomes, assessment plans, and course outlines, and revise them, if needed. Departments also decide how they will organize their self-study and provide a brief written summary to their Dean, along with their mission statement and student learning outcomes.

To facilitate preparation of the self-study report, departments will be provided with the Self-Study Outline in electronic form. The final self-study report should be submitted in hard copy to the Dean, the Provost, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, and the external reviewer. The cover page of the self-study report should list the names of all faculty involved in preparing the report.

Each May, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) provides departments with a *Statistical Information Packet* containing five-year statistics on students, faculty, courses, etc.; this information will be helpful in preparing the self-study report. On request, OPRE can provide much of this information in an Excel spreadsheet. Additional information, such as the results of student learning outcomes assessment, will come from the department. Professional associations are a good source of information on trends in the discipline.

Program Review Options

Coordination of Program Review and Accreditation. To the extent possible, every effort will be made to coordinate program review with accreditation self-studies and visits. The way in which this will happen will depend on a number of factors, including the following:

1. For some departments, program review can be a step in preparing for accreditation. In this case, some flexibility in the program review outline can be worked out, if needed.
2. If a department has multiple programs with different accrediting bodies and is going through a transition period or is proposing new degree programs, program review may be helpful in clarifying how programs complement each other and/or the department's readiness to mount a new degree program.
3. If the accreditation self-study does not address all topics in the program review self-study outline, departments will be asked to address those topics in a mini self-study document. Revised course outlines, an assessment plan, and a concluding five-year plan and memorandum of understanding will still be required.
4. If the accreditation self-study addresses all topics in the program review self-study outline and covers all programs in the department, it may be possible for it to serve as a substitute for program review. Revised course outlines, an assessment plan, and a concluding five-year plan and memorandum of understanding will still be required.

Focused Program Review. Departments that have previously completed program reviews and, through annual reports, etc., demonstrate continuous improvement, have the option of proposing a focused program review. This option gives the Department the opportunity to focus its self-study efforts on a special topic that will assist it in enhancing its programs, and to identify an external reviewer with special expertise in that area. Examples of focused reviews might be a major curriculum revision, or design and implementation of a comprehensive assessment plan. If this alternative does not involve all programs in the department, the program not involved will do a traditional self-study. Departments wishing to explore this option should first discuss it with their Dean. If there is mutual agreement to this approach, the Department should prepare and submit to the Dean for review and approval, a detailed description of the design for its self-study. Revised course outlines, an assessment plan, and a concluding five-year plan and memorandum of understanding will continue to be required of departments that elect a focused program review.

PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY OUTLINE

This outline is intended as a guide for your self-study. Not all questions and topics will be equally applicable to all programs and departments. Additional questions and information may be needed and you may elect a different order for parts of your narrative. The goal of the Self-Study report is to tell a fact-based, analytical and coherent story about your department and its programs. This report should be understandable to an outside reviewer who is not familiar with our university.

Introduction

The introduction should orient the reader to your department and its programs by providing a brief overview of program offerings, special features, recent developments, etc. Include also:

- Mission and goals of your department, and their relationship to the mission of the University.
- Recommendations from the most recent previous program review or accreditation study and actions taken in response to them.
- A brief description of how the self-study was conducted.

Part I – Program Specific Information and Analysis

While the following questions should be addressed for each academic program or concentration, you are encouraged to organize this section of your report in a manner that offers a coherent picture of the programs without undue repetition. Thus, you may wish to respond to the questions in this section separately for each program, or, if programs have a great deal in common, it may be preferable to write this section for several programs simultaneously and point out differences where they exist.

Some of the items below are noted as appropriate for graduate (Grad) or undergraduate (UG) programs and students. Please respond to those questions that are appropriate for your programs.

1. Curriculum

a. Student learning outcomes

- (1) What are the student learning outcomes (knowledge and skills) for students in this program? (List here or attach the outcomes in an appendix.)
- (2) Describe how the outcomes are assessed, what has been learned through assessment and what impact, if any, the assessment results have had on the program.

b. Structure and change

- (1) How is the curriculum organized to support the goals of this program? As part of your response, provide information about the specific courses that contribute to each of the student learning outcomes (see Assessment Matrix I on page 29 or Student Learning Outcomes by Course on page 33).
- (2) Comment on the flexibility available to students in selecting electives to meet their special interests. What criteria, if any, exist for determining offerings, additions, and deletions of electives?
- (3) How does your program build on the five overall WPUNJ student learning outcomes (ability to: express themselves effectively in written and oral form; think critically; locate and use information; integrate knowledge and ideas in a coherent and meaningful manner; work effectively with others) and, for undergraduate programs, outcomes of the General Education program?
- (4) Describe recent changes in the curriculum, including changes made as a result of previous program reviews or accreditation visits. What has been the impact of these changes?
- (5) How does this curriculum compare to national models and/or standards? Comment on any distinctive features of your curriculum.
- (6) How will you integrate present and evolving trends into the curriculum?

c. Overall assessment

Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum and indicate what changes, if any, you anticipate in the next several years.

2. Student Characteristics

a. Entering Undergraduate and Graduate Students

- (1) Append (or insert into the text) the relevant tables from the Statistical Information Packet provided by OPRE. Comment on trends over the past five years, and whether you expect changes in these trends.
 - Number of first-year students and transfers (UG) or number of new graduate students (Grad).
 - Academic characteristics of incoming students: high school class rank, SAT scores, and Basic Skills requirements (UG); scores on graduate

- entrance exams (e.g., GRE, GMAT) and undergraduate GPA's (Grad).
- Types of institutions from which students transfer and their entering GPAs (UG); institutions from which students took their bachelor's degree, including the proportion from WPU and undergraduate GPA's (Grad).
- Numbers of students who apply for admission to the program, the percentage who are accepted and, of those accepted, the percentage who enroll.
- Racial/ethnic, gender and geographic diversity
- Other relevant characteristics

(2) Are there program/departmental criteria for admission? If so, how do these relate to program quality?

b. Currently enrolled majors/graduate students

Append (or insert into the text) the relevant tables from the Statistical Information Packet provided by OPRE. Comment on trends over the past five years and whether you expect changes in these trends. What are the implications of these trends for program planning and course offerings?

- Number of students in the program (UG and Grad) and their distribution across class levels (UG)
- Racial/ethnic and gender diversity
- Distribution across tracks or concentrations in the program
- Number of students seeking teacher certification (UG)
- Other relevant characteristics

c. Overall assessment

Comment on the number and characteristics of students in your program and their impact on achieving program goals. What changes, if any, do you anticipate in the near future?

3. Student Progress, Outcomes and Satisfaction

a. Attrition

What is the attrition rate from your program? To another program on campus (UG)? From the University? Is this satisfactory? Why are students leaving?

b. Progress toward learning outcomes

How does your department assess student progress toward the learning goals as they advance through the curriculum? State specifically how students are assessed

at appropriate intervals to determine their achievement of the student learning outcomes. When problems arise, how are they identified and addressed?

c. Outcomes and satisfaction at graduation

- (1) Comment on trends in the number of graduates over the past five years and whether you expect this to change. (Append the appropriate table from your Statistical Packet or insert table in text.)
- (2) Describe the capstone experiences of students completing your program (e.g., thesis, capstone course performance, portfolio assessment). Give a few examples of how the capstone experiences reflect the achievement of program outcomes. Comment on possible implications for program change.
- (3) What are students' job opportunities upon graduation? What types of positions do they take?
- (4) What proportion of your students continue their education in professional or graduate school? Where do they attend?
- (5) How is the satisfaction of graduating students and/or alumni assessed? What has been learned from this assessment and how has it been used to modify, if necessary, teaching/learning, the curriculum, and support services?

d. Overall Assessment

Comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the program in terms of the numbers of students completing the program, their level of achievement, and their satisfaction with the program. What are the implications of these results for the program in the future?

Part II – Departmental Information and Analysis

The following questions address issues that typically cut across programs and affect the entire department. Some items are noted as appropriate for graduate (Grad) or undergraduate (UG) programs and students. Please respond to those questions that are appropriate for your department.

1. Curriculum

a. General Education and service courses

- (1) What are the student learning outcomes for the General Education courses offered in your department and how do these contribute to the university-wide student learning outcomes and outcomes of the General Education Program? (If desired, Matrix 2 on page 30 can be used to organize this information.) Describe how these outcomes are assessed, what has been learned through assessment and what impact, if any, the assessment results have had on these courses.
- (2) Does your department offer service courses for other programs? If so, what are the student learning outcomes for those courses and how are they assessed? What has been learned through assessment and what impact has this had on these courses?

b. Interdisciplinary courses and other curricular collaborations

Do you share courses, faculty, or other resources with other departments (e.g., cross-listed courses, team taught courses, interdisciplinary programs, etc.)? If so, briefly describe these connections and the impact on your department and programs.

c. Minors

Briefly describe any minors offered in your department. What are the student learning outcomes for each minor and how are these assessed? What has been learned through assessment and what impact has this had on the minor?

d. Specific Curricular Issues

Does your department support student learning in the areas listed below? If so, cite examples and comment on the effectiveness of these efforts and any differences between graduate and undergraduate programs, if relevant.

- (1) Research experience. Is it an integral part of the program?

- (2) Information literacy skills, i.e., the ability to locate, evaluate, and use information, including the ability to use library and other information resources and services.
- (3) Information technology skills.
- (4) Application of learning through internships, practicum experiences, etc.
- (5) Understanding of diversity as it applies to this discipline.

2. **Students**

a. **Other students served by your Department**

- (1) How many minors are served by your department and do you expect this to change in next several years? If so, how?
- (2) Comment on enrollment trends over the past five years in courses serving primarily students outside your program and whether you expect changes in these trends. (Append relevant tables from the Statistical Packet or insert tables into the text).

b. **Support services for students**

Briefly describe the support services offered and comment on their effectiveness for undergraduate and, if appropriate, graduate students. Consider, for example:

- (1) Advisement and mentoring
- (2) Out-of-class contact with faculty
- (3) Professional organizations and clubs
- (4) Orientation
- (5) Academic support services (tutoring, writing center, Science Enrichment Center, etc.)
- (6) Special learning opportunities for high achieving students.
- (7) Career guidance
- (8) Other

3. **Faculty**

a. **Number of faculty and their characteristics**

- (1) Append (or insert into the text) the relevant tables from the Statistical Information Packet provided by OPRE. Comment on trends over the past five years, and whether you expect changes in these trends.
 - Number of full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty
 - Of full-time faculty, the number who are tenured, on tenure track, or on temporary appointment
 - Distribution of full-time faculty by rank
 - Academic credentials of full-time faculty
 - Gender and ethnicity of full-time faculty and adjuncts
- (2) To what extent does the program depend upon adjunct faculty, half-time faculty or faculty from other programs? How does this affect the quality of instruction? How does the Department assure quality? Through hiring procedures? Orientation activities?
- (3) Attach current curriculum vitae for faculty in your department and provide a brief profile of each faculty member, including: graduate degrees, institutions from which degrees were granted and the date, and specific areas of expertise.
- (4) Is faculty sufficient in number, academic credentials, and areas of expertise to ensure that:
 - Required courses at both the graduate and undergraduate levels can be offered on a regular basis?
 - Specialists are available in important fields that are within the scope of your graduate and undergraduate programs?
 - General Education responsibilities can be covered?
 - Other service responsibilities of the Department can be covered?
 - Appropriate levels of advisement and mentoring can be offered to both undergraduate and graduate students?
- (5) Comment on recent faculty searches and the ability of your department to attract faculty with appropriate credentials and expertise.

b. **Faculty accomplishments and reputation**

Drawing from faculty CV's, and recent faculty and department year-end reports, briefly describe and comment on faculty accomplishments in the following areas.

- (1) Research, Scholarship and Creative Expression. If appropriate, append statistical summaries of Faculty Achievements in this area from recent Year- End Reports.

- (2) Teaching and program/course development
- (3) Grant and other fundraising accomplishments
- (4) Fellowships, honors and other awards
- (5) Active participation in professional organizations and other areas of accomplishment
- (6) Service within and external to the University

c. Faculty Development

Briefly describe the opportunities available within your department, college and the university to support the continued growth and development of your faculty. Comment on the number of faculty who take advantage of these opportunities and whether the opportunities are sufficient and appropriate.

4. Pedagogy/Teaching

- a. What is the average class size for different types of courses? Does this influence teaching methods? If so, how? Give specific examples.
- b. Briefly describe the types of teaching strategies used in courses in your department. Comment on the effectiveness of these strategies and changes that might enhance teaching and learning.
- c. What opportunities are available for faculty to improve their teaching?
- d. What efforts are made to create a learning environment conducive to learning by students from diverse backgrounds?
- e. What incentives, support, training, or opportunities are provided to encourage faculty to use active and collaborative learning in class?
- f. Is technology integrated into the curriculum? Provide examples.

5. Library

In responding to the following questions, refer to the Statistical Summary Characterizing Library Holdings and Services prepared for your department by the Library. (See p. 35 for an outline of the information that will be provided.)

- a. Comment on the extent to which Library services and resources adequately support your programs and concentrations at the undergraduate level and, if appropriate, at the graduate level.
- b. Given the Library's primary collection emphasis on curriculum, to what extent do Library resources and services support the research and scholarship needs of your faculty?
- c. How are your department's needs communicated to the Library and how can this process be improved?
- d. What Library resources or services beyond those currently available are needed to develop and maintain excellence?

6. Community Service

What services does your department offer to the community?

- a. How do these services relate to department mission and goals?
- b. What is the impact of these services on the community? Your programs? The University? Do the benefits justify the allocation of resources?

7. Support Staff, Facilities and Equipment

- a. Have resources in the following areas been sufficient to develop and maintain excellence? Consider support staff, computers and other equipment, travel, supplies, facilities (classrooms, offices, labs, etc.).
- b. To what extent are resources shared with other departments or programs? How might this be expanded to the benefit of all?

Part III – Overall Assessment of Programs and Department

Reflecting on the information provided in Parts I and II, respond to the questions listed below. Because your responses have direct implications for the future direction of your department and its programs, broad participation in developing them is strongly recommended.

1. Provide an overall assessment of how well your department and programs are meeting their goals. What are areas of strength? What are areas in need of attention?
2. What comparative advantages do your programs enjoy relative to similar programs at other institutions in the region? What possible comparative advantages might be developed in the future?
3. If your department offers more than one program (e.g., graduate and undergraduate or several programs at the same level), comment on the relationship between these programs – how they complement or compete with each other, how resources are allocated among them, etc.
4. Are any of the programs in your department in need of a change in direction? If so, briefly describe the direction(s) being considered and challenges you face in implementing these changes.
5. The concluding activity of the Program Review process will be to develop a five-year plan for moving your department and its programs to the next level of excellence. If you were to write the plan at this point, what are some of the specific issues would you address in the plan?
6. List several aspects of your programs and/or department you would like the external reviewer to focus on.

DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT PLAN

What achievements do we expect of our graduates? To what extent are our graduates reaching these expectations? How do we know this? What changes need to be made to reach expectations? These assessment questions are central to providing the best possible learning experiences for our students and ensuring that those who complete our programs meet our goals for student learning. Answers to these questions also form a major section of the Department Assessment Plan that is submitted to the external reviewer along with the Department Self-Study document. The following information will be helpful in reviewing and refining your assessment plan. Additional assistance is available from your College Assessment Coordinator, members of the Senate Assessment Committee and the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.

Within the context of an academic program, an assessment plan is a plan for determining whether students are achieving the student learning outcomes that have been set for that program. The starting point is a set of clearly stated and measurable student learning outcomes. (**Measurable** should be understood to mean “to reasonably estimate by evaluation or comparison.”)

Understanding Assessment Terms

Assessment in general, is any systematic process used to gather information that can be used to improve instruction of students, functioning of staff, and administering of institutions of higher education. Ideally it compares actual performance in response to expectations that are clear, shared, and able to be achieved. These expectations are usually stated as goals, objectives, and outcomes.

Goals are general statements about where a department, a course, a lesson is headed. (Example from Biology: “To provide students. . .with the skills that serve to enhance their understanding of the environment. . .”)

Objectives are interpretive statements of goals in concrete terms so that observable evidence of their having been reached can be determined. (Example from Biology: “To acquire specific skills associated with the experimental nature of biological research and experimentation.” More than one objective may sometimes be needed to achieve a specific goal.

Outcomes are statements of actual performances expected of students as a result of the teaching/learning process, performances that are assessable. Outcomes are critical because they are used to determine if an objective has been reached. They are most usefully expressed in the form of expectations. For example, “Upon graduation as an Environmental Science major, a student should be able to demonstrate understanding of experimental design including: 1) formulate a hypothesis and propose means to test that hypothesis; 2) make and record observations; 3) identify the assumptions underlying the hypothesis; 4) draw conclusions and make inferences from data; and 5) perform statistical analyses of data.”

Another example: in Psychology, “when presented with behavioral phenomenon (such as depressed behavior in a woman who has had a miscarriage. . .), the graduating student should be able to explain the behavior from a variety of psychological viewpoints, including the behavioral, psychoanalytic, cognitive, psychological, humanistic, and interpersonal approaches.”

Again: in the Jazz Studies and Performance Program, at the point of graduation the student should be able to “transcribe solos by performers who play the same instrument as the student.”

And finally: in the Special Education program, the student should be able to “identify community resources, e.g., professional, government, volunteer, and parent, and augment services provided to handicapped persons in the schools, and guide and counsel parents of students in their use.”

Developing Your Assessment Plan

Your assessment plan should provide very specific information concerning: 1) the methods to be used in the assessment, 2) the point at which the assessment will take place, and 3) the level of performance expected for each assessment activity. It is important to remember that assessment is formative in nature; that is, it asks how are we in the department doing with the achievement of these outcomes and what changes might be made to do better? Your assessment plan should include for each student learning outcome objective:

1. Assessment Methods

How will you know if students are achieving the outcome objectives set for them? What type(s) of measures best serve for the assessment of each objective? A variety of assessment techniques can be used to answer this question. They are usually of two kinds, **direct** and **indirect** measures. Some common types of the former are standardized instruments such as the GRE or ACT Comp; locally designed examinations and tests, written or oral; student performance of tasks (e.g., performance on a musical instrument or presentation of a business plan); and tracking student behavior over time (e.g., portfolios, alumni surveys). Some examples of indirect measures would be interviews, focus group results, satisfaction surveys, and reported job performance.

Multiple methods should be used to increase the reliability of the results, and you should be satisfied that these methods are appropriate for measuring the outcomes you’re interested in (i.e., they are *valid* measures). Identifying and developing appropriate assessment methods can take quite a bit of time and often it is necessary to modify and refine methods as a result of experience. In your assessment plan, the methods for assessing each outcome objective should be clearly described.

2. Assessment Timetable

When will the assessments take place? Typically **assessments are administered at several points in a program**. This is helpful in identifying needed intervention for individual students as well as changes in the curriculum that may be required if students are not satisfactorily developing the prerequisite skills and knowledge base needed to advance to more challenging courses. A capstone assessment may also be helpful in gauging students’ achievement over their academic career. Your assessment plan should indicate exactly when each assessment will take place.

3. Level of Performance

In order to determine if students are achieving the desired outcomes, acceptable performance should be defined for each assessment. Definitions should be very specific and

will vary by the assessment method. **Rubrics that define levels of performance in very concrete terms can help to clarify expectations for both students and faculty.**

Implementing Your Assessment Plan

Once you have worked out your assessment plan, you need to develop an implementation calendar that includes, working backwards:

- a. Date(s) by which the department will have completed its first “cycle” of student learning outcomes assessments.
- b. Chronology for introducing assessments into the student program.
- c. Date(s) by which the department will be piloting its assessments.
- d. Date(s) by which the department will finalize its initial selection of assessment methodologies and instruments.

Working out these matters usually raises other issues that faculty should anticipate:

- a. What happens when outcomes are not achieved? What happens to the student? Does he or she have to take an extra course? What are the implications, if any, for course content, pedagogy, admission standards, grading standards, etc.?
- b. The process of developing your assessment plan should be participatory and may be as informative as actually conducting the assessments.
- c. Developing and refining your plan should be a continuous, recursive process.
- d. Students should be informed about the learning outcome objectives and assessment methods used, as well as the level of performance expected of them.

POSSIBLE FORMAT FOR ASSESSMENT PLANS

Name of Program _____

General Introduction

- Brief description of the program and its purposes
- Basis for student learning outcomes: Department, College, and/or University mission, other sources such as professional or discipline-based associations, societal needs, etc.

Outcomes and Assessment Methodologies

In this section, it is important to be as detailed as possible. Your first priority is to identify clearly stated and measurable learning outcomes for students in your program. See **Developing an Assessment Plan**, above, for examples of outcomes in several programs. Professional organizations and accrediting agencies in your discipline are also an excellent source of examples.

If you have not figured out how you will assess all of your outcomes, you should indicate in your time line when you will finalize all of your assessment methodologies. If you have any samples of assessment instruments, please attach them. To the extent possible, each outcome should have more than one assessment. If a given competency is developed over time (as most are), there should be assessments at various points in time to allow opportunity for intervention if appropriate progress is not being made and/or to modify course requirements, instructional approaches, etc.

If appropriate, you may wish to organize your plan in a hierarchical fashion with broad goals, more specific objectives and then outcome statements (see **Developing an Assessment Plan**, above). At a minimum, you will need to list your outcomes and the methods you will use to assess them. As noted above, there should be multiple assessments for each outcome and these assessments may occur over time as students progress through the program.

The format would be:

Student Learning Outcome #1

- Methods of assessing outcome #1

Student Learning Outcome #2

- Methods of assessing outcome #2

Student Learning Outcome.....

Time Line for Implementing Assessment Plan

This section should spell out in detail a time line for implementing your assessment plan.

- **Academic Year 2002-2003**
 - Activities for fall semester
 - Activities for spring semester

- **Academic Year 2003-2004**
 - Activities for fall semester
 - Activities for spring semester

- **Etc. until plan is fully implemented**

Note the following:

- If you have not developed assessments for each of your outcomes, this task should be included in your time line. Thus in year one, some of your time may be devoted to identifying assessment strategies for some of your outcomes.
- You will need to build in time for developing and piloting assessments, reaching agreement on required levels of competency, developing scoring rubrics, etc.
- The time line should be specific in terms of where (e.g., which sections of which courses), when (e.g., middle or end of semester), etc.
- You will need to include in your time line activities that surround assessment, e.g., deciding:
 - how you will orient students to the assessment process and standards
 - how you will use the results of assessment for program improvement

In sum, this plan should guide the department in developing and implementing a meaningful assessment plan that will contribute to enhancing student learning. The assessment matrices on pp. 29-33 may be helpful in organizing your assessment efforts.

MATRIX 2: CONTRIBUTION OF CURRICULUM TO UNIVERSITY-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

MAJOR/PROGRAM/TRACK: _____

<i>UNIVERSITY-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME</i>	<i>NATURE OF SUPPORT FOR SKILL IN THE DEPARTMENTAL CURRICULUM</i>	<i>COURSES IN WHICH THIS SKILL IS TAUGHT OR REINFORCED</i>
<i>ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY EXPRESS THEMSELVES IN WRITTEN AND ORAL FORM</i>		
<i>ABILITY TO THINK CRITICALLY</i>		
<i>ABILITY TO LOCATE AND USE INFORMATION</i>		
<i>ABILITY TO INTEGRATE KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS IN A COHERENT AND MEANINGFUL MANNER</i>		
<i>ABILITY TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHERS</i>		

Adapted from SUNY Brockport Program Review Document

MATRIX 3: STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT – ASSESSMENT METHODS AND CRITERION/STANDARD FOR SUCCESS

MAJOR/PROGRAM/TRACK: _____

<i>SLO No.</i>	<i>HOW IS EACH STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME ASSESSED? SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS?</i>	<i>WHAT IS THE CRITERION/STANDARD FOR STUDENT SUCCESS WITH EACH ASSESSMENT?</i>
	<i>COURSE-BASED ASSESSMENT:</i> <i>OTHER ASSESSMENT MEASURES:</i>	<i>COURSE-BASED ASSESSMENT:</i> <i>OTHER ASSESSMENT MEASURES:</i>

Adapted from SUNY Brockport Program Review Document

MATRIX 4: ASSESSMENT FINDINGS AND ACTUAL OR ANTICIPATED DEPARTMENTAL ACTIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

MAJOR/PROGRAM/TRACK: _____

<i>SLO No.</i>	<i>WHAT IS THE STATUS OF ASSESSMENT OF EACH STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME?</i>	<i>WHAT DEPARTMENTAL ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN OR IS ANTICIPATED AS A RESULT OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR THIS STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME?</i>

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES BY COURSE

Program: _____

Outcomes Addressed in Each Course					
<small>(Place an X to indicate which outcomes are covered in which course)</small>					
COURSE	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
Course 101					
Course 232					
Course 241					
Course 355					
Course 451					
Course 475					
Etc.					

LIBRARY DATA SETS FOR PROGRAM REVIEW

The following statistical summary characterizing Library holdings and services will be provided to Departments undergoing program review during September of the first year in the Program Review process.

Book/Media Collection

1. Total number of book titles and estimated number of book titles by LC class relevant to department.
2. Total number of items circulated in the last academic year.
3. Number of books circulated in the LC classes relevant to that department.
4. Estimated number of relevant media titles.

Journal Collection

1. Number and list of titles "charged" to that department, in both print and electronic format
2. Usage data on these items, where available

Reference Resources

1. List of major reference resources and databases supporting that discipline
2. Number of items in #1 and as a percentage of total.
3. Statistics on relevant database usage.

Acquisitions

1. Total number of items ordered and number of items ordered by faculty and selector for department
2. Profile of collection development activity for the department showing growth areas by LC class, percentage of all faculty who request materials, percentage of all orders by faculty and by selector.

User Education

Total number of class sessions taught and number for that department and as percentage of the whole

Reserves

1. Total number of faculty with materials on reserve and number of faculty in the department using reserves
2. Total number of courses offered by the department using reserve services.

Material Expenditures

1. Total dollars expended on books, journals and databases
2. Total dollars expended for department on books/media, journals, serials

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4/26/02

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING PROGRAM REVIEW CONSULTANTS

Departments are responsible for proposing to the Dean and Provost three possible reviewers who meet the following criteria:

- Prior experience in program evaluation.
- From an institution with a program comparable to the program they will be reviewing at William Paterson.
- Expertise on the current requirements of any relevant accrediting body if reviewing departments with accredited programs or programs seeking accreditation.
- From a college or university outside New Jersey.
- Not have a personal or professional relationship with faculty member(s) in the Department that would constitute a conflict of interest. Possible conflicts of interest should be described on the nomination form.

For each proposed reviewer, the Department should submit a nomination form (see attached) and a current CV.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM REVIEW CONSULTANTS

The primary purpose of program review at William Paterson University is program improvement. During the first phase of this process, each department conducts an in-depth study of the department and its program(s) and prepares a report that concludes with an analysis of strengths and weaknesses and recommendations for future direction.

The external consultant brings an expert and fresh perspective to this process. Based on a review of the self-study report and other documents, as well as information gained from the campus visit, the reviewer is charged with offering a frank assessment of strengths and weaknesses, and making recommendations for moving the department and its program(s) to the next level of excellence.

The culminating activity for the program review process is for the department to develop a five-year plan with concrete actions and time lines for moving forward in directions that have been mutually agreed to by the department and administration. The external consultant's report is key in identifying those directions.

The outline for the program review self-study report (*WPU Program Review Handbook*) prompts departments to discuss specific issues under the general topics of curriculum, faculty, students, pedagogy, community service, and staff, facilities and equipment. The report of the external consultant should speak to issues of special note (positive or negative) under each of these general topics and raise any additional issues related to achieving excellence. Where possible, the reviewer is requested to offer specific recommendations.

Reviewers are expected to submit their reports within one month following their campus visit.

Nomination Form for Program Review Consultant

Please submit a separate form for each nominee and attach a current CV.

Academic unit being reviewed: _____

Name of consultant: _____

Title or rank: _____

Current institution: _____

Please provide the following information if it is not available on the CV.

Degrees	Subject/Major	University/Institution
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Describe the qualifications that make this person an appropriate reviewer for your program.

Describe any personal or professional relationships between the nominee and member(s) of your department that might constitute a potential conflict of interest.

Signature: _____ Date: _____