United States University

Program Review

and

Learning Outcome Assessment

Manual

Approved by Faculty Senate

July, 2014

Introduction

United States University (USU) is committed to academic quality. To this end, it has established a system of program review which includes assessment of learning outcomes at the course and program levels. All programs offered by USU will be reviewed every five years, according to the program review schedule shown in Appendix A. A similar schedule of Program Learning Outcome has been developed in which all PLOs are to be reviewed within a five-year cycle (see Appendix B).

The faculty of USU hold primary responsibility for assessing program quality, with assistance from academic administration. This manual has been reviewed by academic administration and presented to the Academic Committee of faculty Senate for approval by the USU Faculty Senate. The manual is designed to provide direction to program self study teams in the development of a program review document. As learning outcome assessment is a major element in program review, procedures for these assessments are included her.

At the conclusion of each annual cycle of program review and learning outcome assessment, the manual will be reviewed and changes made as appropriate to improve the quality and implementation of the program review/learning assessment process.

Program Review Process and Timeline

The program review process is designed to assess the academic quality and fiscal sustainability of each program offered at United States University. The timeline of program reviews is designed to provide information on resources required to implement recommendations for quality improvement in sufficient time for consideration in budget development[1]. The general timeline for program review is:

- September: program creates self-study team and assigns team chair, who will be responsible for creating the program review document

- October: team assembles required data on enrollment, faculty, learning outcome results, revenue/expense, graduation, retention. Team reviews data.

- November – document is developed

- December – document completed.

- January - team reviews draft, completes program evaluation and improvement plans, provides suggestions for external review.

- February – program review forwarded to Faculty Senate Academic Committee for review

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[1] As USU operates on a calendar year budget, budget development occurs in fall of the preceding year.

- March – program review forwarded to school dean, who reviews and forwards to Provost.

- April – External review conducted, report forwarded to program/dean/Provost

- May – self study team incorporates external review report into program review, adjusts recommendations as required.

- June - Final program review document, included external review evaluation completed and forwarded to Provost for review and inclusion of resource recommendations in budge process.

This suggested timeline has been designed with an early conclusion to permit reasonable extension of the process as needed. Resource recommendations must be made available by the end of August, to permit consideration in the following year budget development.

Program Review Sections

Introduction

Create a history of the program, including the following:

- How and when accreditor approval for this program was obtained

- How course content was developed. Does course content align with recommendations or best practices of related educational organizations (e.g., programmatic accreditors, other national/international organizations related to the course content area)

- Any changes that have been made in the program prior to this review. Document the approval of these changes

- How does this program align with and further the mission and values of USU?

- What is the relationship of this program to other USU programs?

- Modalities in which the program is offered.

Academic Quality

Include in this section the following elements:

Learning Outcome Development and Assessment

- List the program learning outcomes and describe how they were developed.

- How do program learning outcomes mirror/align with best practices in the program content area (e.g., recommended outcomes of programmatic accreditors or national/international organizations)

- How do Program Learning Outcomes align with USU's Institutional Learning Outcomes?

- If an undergraduate program, how do the program's learning outcomes align with the core competencies required by WSCUC?

- Are course learning outcomes aligned with program learning outcomes? Describe the levels of achievement expected at different levels of student progress through the program. Include the curriculum map in an appendix.

- Discuss how the program assures that student progress is sequential and cumulative. How does the program facilitate students enrolling in courses in which initial achievement in an outcome is expected prior to enrolling in courses in which higher levels of achievement are expected.

- Discuss how the courses in your program provide students with the opportunity to integrate knowledge and skills, and how achievement of integration is evaluated.

- How are program and course learning outcomes assessed? Include a schedule showing which PLOs are scheduled for assessment in which year, which indicates review of all PLOs within a five-year cycle. If an undergraduate program, show alignment of learning outcome cycle with WSCUC requirement of one core competency assessed in 2014 and two in 2015.

- Include here the result of any learning outcome assessment that has been completed. On the basis of these results, what changes were made in the assessment process or in courses to improve results? (If results of any learning outcome assessment are completed prior to the final draft of this self study, adjust this section to include those results as well.)

- Does the program hold any programmatic accreditation (e.g., IACBE, CCNE) or continuous review by an eternal agency (e.g., BRN). If so, include in an appendix the most recent external review and discuss here any commendations and recommendations from the external review.

Faculty Qualifications

- What is the process of evaluating prospective core and adjunct faculty? How does the program assure that faculty assigned to courses are qualified by education and experience to provide quality instruction?

- How many core faculty does the program currently employ? (Give rank and full-part time level of employment.) What are the responsibilities of core faculty? What is the process by which additional core faculty can be added? Include current vitae of core faculty in an appendix.

- How many adjunct faculty currently teach in the program? What are the responsibilities of adjunct faculty? How are adjunct faculty incorporated into the program development and learning outcome assessment processes?

- Include information on gender and ethnicity of faculty teaching in your program. Do the demographic characteristics of your core and adjunct faculty align with

USU's commitment to diversity and the demographic characteristics of the students in your program?

- What resources are provided for faculty (core/adjunct) professional and pedagogical development?

- What is the process by which core/adjunct faculty are evaluated? What are the results of the most recent evaluation process?

Indirect Evidence of Academic Quality

- How are student evaluations of courses used in assessing academic quality?

- What are the results of the most recent course evaluations in your program? (Use at least the previous term's data, but you may include additional information from prior terms.)

- Describe any changes made in your program as the result of these evaluations.

- Provide information here on the results of the most recent student satisfaction survey from students in your program. How have these results impacted program activity?

Summary

Based on the review of your program's academic quality elements described above:

- What changes would you like to make in your program?

- How would these changes improve the quality of your program?

- How would these changes contribute to student learning?

- What resources would be required in order to facilitate these changes?

Enrollment[2] and Program Sustainability

Include in this section information about program total and new enrollment trends, first-year persistence, and graduation[3] rates.

- What is the demographic composition (gender, ethnicity, age) of students enrolled in this program in fall of the review year? How do these demographic characteristics align with the mission and values of USU?

- What are the total fall I enrollment trends from 2012 to the present? Is enrollment increasing, decreasing, or holding steady?

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[2] Data to complete this section will be made available to the program following fall I census date for the review year. Program-level data are available from 2012 to the present; no program-level data were developed prior to 2012. As most programs began in 2011 or 2012 this does not appreciably impact analysis.

[3] Because most programs at USU did not begin until 2011 or 2012, little graduation data may be available in 2014 or 2015, as undergraduate students will not have been enrolled for four or six years and graduate enrollment was very low in 2011 and 2012.

- What are the fall I new enrollment trends from 2012 to the present? Is new enrollment increasing, decreasing, or holding steady?

- What are the current first-year persistence rates (retention) for prior year matriculates? How does this compare to benchmark institution persistence rates? Are there major demographic differences between students who continue and those who do not?

- What data are available for graduation rates? Do the graduate demographics align with program demographics?

- How does the enrollment information provided above impact the program's ability to become/remain fiscally sustainable? What changes would be needed to improve the program's fiscal stability? What resources might be required to accomplish this?

- How does the retention/graduation data provided above impact the program's academic quality, particularly in relation to student demographics? If applicable, what changes would be needed to improve the program's retention and graduation rates? What resources might be required to accomplish this.

- How does the program maintain/improve its position in the current educational and societal environment? What changes might be necessary in order to improve the program's position in the educational marketplace? What resources might be required to accomplish this?

Summary and Conclusions

Based on the information in this self study, conduct an analysis of the program's academic quality and sustainability. In each of these two areas:

- What are this program's strengths? How can these be used to improve the program's position academically and fiscally?

- What are this program's weaknesses? How might these be converted to strengths?

- What are the program's opportunities? How can these opportunities be made realities?

- What are the program's threats? How can these be neutralized?

- What are the most important changes to be made? What are the resources required to implement change?

External Review Recommendation

Provide 1-3 choices of external reviewer to review the self study and accompanying appendices and conduct a one-day onsite program review and provide recommendations for program improvement. Indicate how these potential reviewers are

qualified to conduct this review in this section and a recent vita in an appendix. Include in this section estimated cost of this external review and report.

Resource Summary

List all recommendations made in this self study together with resources required (costs and personnel) to accomplish the tasks. As not all recommendations may be fundable in the next year, prioritize the recommendations in order of importance, demonstrating how certain activities have the greatest potential to create improvement and therefore should be accomplished and funded first. Update this section following the external review.

Learning Outcome Assessment Process

Through its Academic Committee, the Faculty Senate of USU guides the learning outcome assessment process. In 2013 all programs revised Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), aligned PLOs with the similarly revised Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), and created curriculum maps aligning Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) with PLOs. A schedule of outcome assessment at the course/program level has been established, with all outcomes scheduled for assessment within a five-year period.

Developing learning outcome assessment processes began at USU in 2013. The outcomes scheduled for assessment in 2014-2016 are those outcomes which align with WSCUC core competencies. For this reason, at this time assessment is organized at the University level, with all programs utilizing a consistent rubric. The rubrics are included as an appendix to this manual. Undergraduate and graduate assessment is distinguished by the level of achievement anticipated. Also, rubrics contain outcome descriptions which may be relevant for graduate programs only. Rubrics used in assessing outcomes will be included in course syllabi.

As programs move to assessment of content-specific outcomes (e.g, business outcomes in the business programs) separate rubrics will be developed.

Evaluations are conducted at the course level. For those learning outcomes scheduled for assessment in a given year, each course will provide an assignment designed to directly assess student achievement of that outcome at the appropriate level, as designated by the curriculum map. The results of these assessments will be aggregated across program courses for review by the Academic Committee and program faculty, to assess student achievement and develop improvement plans as needed. Results will be reported to school deans and Provost together with recommendations for improvement and resources required to accomplish requested changed.

Timeline for initial learning outcome assessment. As the assessment process is refined additional evaluations will be conducted with the goal of evaluating all learning outcomes in all courses within a program.

Summer
Rubrics developed, rater reliability assessed, course assignments for evaluation developed.

Fall terms
Assessment undertaken – results compiled by Academic Committee Chair, organized by program and level (undergraduate/graduate)

Spring terms
Reports reviewed by Academic Committee, discussion with program faculty and development of improvement plans. Plans to be implemented in the following fall terms and results compared between both assessment periods.

Appendix A:

USU Program Review Five-Year Cycle

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
MSN-FNP	BSHS	MAED	BAM	MBA
MSN - Adm/Edu		BSN-ABSN	MSHS	

Due to the fact that most programs began in 2011-12 it was determined to consider these programs later in the cycle to permit sufficient program growth and activity to warrant review.

Schedule of Program Review Activity

- Fall year one – Self Study Process Begins
    - Program team created
    - Data gathering begins
    - PLO outcomes from prior years gathered and current year PLO assessment begun
- January, year two – Self study completed, document to Faculty Senate Academic Committee (FSAC)
- February, year two – Faculty Senate forwards study and comments to Provost for review
- March, year two – Provost review complete, external review scheduled
- April, year two –External review conducted
- May, year two – External review complete, Program incorporates results into program review, forwards to results to , dean, FSAC, Provost
- June, year two – Program Review approved, improvement plans forwarded to CFO for inclusion in 2015 budget

Appendix B

Student Learning Outcome Five-Year Cycle of Review

WASC Core Competency	USU Institutional Learning Outcomes	Review In
Written Communication	1. Communicate clearly and effectively through writing, speaking, and using technology.	2015-16
Oral Communication		
Quantitative Reasoning	2. Apply quantitative reasoning to address complex challenges	2014-15
Critical Thinking	3. Apply critical thinking in research and problem-solving processes	2013-14
Information Literacy	4. Effectively gather, analyze, and integrate information from a variety of sources.	2014-15
	5. Demonstrate ethical reasoning and actions to provide leadership as a socially responsible citizen.	2017-18
	6. Work effectively across race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender and sexual orientation.	2016-17
	7. Work collaboratively as members and leaders of diverse groups.	2016-17
	8. Exhibit mastery of knowledge and skills within a discipline.	2015-16

Program Learning Outcomes which align with a given ILO should be assessed in the year in which that ILO is scheduled. Some programs may have numerous outcomes associated with ILO 8, and assessment of these can be spread throughout other years.