Support and Suggestions for
Academic Program Review Process

The suggestions presented in this report were developed by the College of Arts & Sciences Dean's office in response to departments' and programs' feedback on the *Outline of the Internal Self-Study Report*. The Dean's office developed this document based upon the experiences, suggestions, and approaches taken by the authors of the earliest self-studies as they under took this important task. Self-study authors are encouraged to pick and choose from among the suggested approaches as suits their individual needs.

Organizational and development suggestions

- In departments with multiple programs, the department may decide whether to create individual or combined Self Study reports. Due to the general nature of some sections, departments may find it helpful to address these general areas collectively and disaggregate information in other sections where discussion of individual programs is more useful.
- One successful approach to organization and delegation of work is to designate a primary author to oversee the processes and consistency in language and to develop subcommittees to draft major sections. Other departments have divided authorship by section and designated a chief author to integrate disparate pieces and to ensure a consistent "voice." Regardless of the design of the authorship, all department faculty should have an opportunity to review and respond to a draft of the document before it is finalized.
- Some minor sub-headings are not applicable in all programs and can be removed.
- Some questions/items may seem repetitive in nature. Authors are encouraged to use hyperlinking or section reference to direct the reader to information in other sections of the document including the appendices.
- When considering how to organize the information, major headings and first-level subheadings should be consistent with the outline provided by the Office of Accreditation, Accountability, & Academic Services. Departments can combine, where appropriate, narratives and data displays in other levels of the outline to reduce repetition of information.

Common reports and availability

- Department Annual Reports should be stored within the department, but are also available by contacting the Administrative Coordinator in the Dean's office.
- Annual Assessment Plans are maintained in OARS. The department chair and program assessment coordinator have access to this system. In cases where the primary author is not one of these individuals the Dean or Unit (College) Assessment Director can request temporary access for the primary author.
- College Annual Reports can be requested from the Administrative Coordinator in the Dean's office.
- Data Reports for institutional level data (e.g., NSSE or PSRI) are maintained in the CAS_Chairs Dropbox (most recent) or the CASDeansCouncil network drive (archived). In cases where the response rate for an individual program is sufficient these reports

include major specific data; however, for most programs in CAS a report by disciplinary group (e.g., Humanities or Social Sciences) is the most specific available.

- The Vision of Distinction process for establishing University priorities is no longer used. In section referring to this document, the program is encouraged to think more broadly of University and College initiatives in which they have engaged.
- Any reference to the Touchstone Program should be read as the General Education Program.
- The Winthrop University Facts and Information page has open information on credit hour production and completion rates. Similarly, the Data Warehouse can provide limited demographic data by department/program. In addition, there is some access to information related to faculty load, grade distribution, and faculty profiles.
- The Data and Technology Coordinator can help with some course-level data through Blackboard Analytics. The primary author or chair should collect a list of specific questions and meet with the Data and Technology Coordinator to discuss a possible and reasonable timeline. In most cases this data will still require some work by the department but may provide an avenue other than transcript review or manual review of enrollments.

Suggested sources and direction for specific sections

Executive Summary

Highlight major findings and areas for consideration for individuals reviewing the document.

Narrative Section

History and mission
Discuss the development of the program and faculty from both historical and mission perspectives. This narrative should provide insight into the development of the department, program, and mission over time.
> **Possible sources of information**
> - Louise Pettus Archives (documents tracing the work/involvement of the department, formation on the department, etc.)
> - Past Winthrop University catalogs (trace the development of curriculum, track changes in faculty size or make-up, etc.)
> - University and College mission statements
> - Previous self-studies (past goals and results)
> - Oral histories with long-time and/or Emeriti faculty (important milestones or initiatives)

Discuss program structure and reputation
Provide an overview of how the degree program(s) is/are situated into the larger University, community, state, and regional context.
> **Sources of information for viability**
> - Economic development reports
> - US Bureau of Labor Statistics
> - US Census Bureau (for population demographics, for instance)

- External reports/sources:
    i. AAC&U reports related to *Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP)*
    ii. Phi Beta Kappa's *National Arts and Sciences Initiative*
    iii. American Academy of Arts & Sciences (Including *The Heart of the Matter*, *The State of the Humanities*, *Restoring the Foundation: The Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream*, and materials from the Commission on the Humanities & Social Sciences)

Curricular comparison sources
- Publications produced by professional associations
- Research on best practices in discipline
- Connections to LEAP High Impact Practices
- The most recent developments in the field
- Accreditation agency or state requirements (e.g, licensure requirements and professional program admissions requirements)
- Institutional priorities
- National/state/regional needs

Peer institution selection
When considering a peer group consider what is not only peers for the institution, but also peers in the specific discipline.
- Higher education institutions in South Carolina
- Higher education institutions in Charlotte metro area
- Big South Athletic conference
- Winthrop University's published comparison group

National accreditation status
The Program Review discussed here is designed for programs without external accreditation expectation. However, this section allows departments with both accredited and non-accredited programs to discuss related accreditation bodies. Examples include CAEP or Specialized Program Association accreditation for programs with teacher licensure and the American Chemical Society for some tracks in the Department of Chemistry, Physics, and Geology.

Program need, size, and placement rates
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics (for program demand) and placement rates of students from relevant graduate and professional school programs
- Senior exit surveys
- Convenience sampling of alumni using social media (Facebook, Linked In, etc.)
- CAS alumni surveys
- Data from professional associations

Service to non-majors
- Discussion of courses offered in general education, required by other major programs, or specifically designed for specific populations. (Data related to such service may well appear in other sections of the report. Authors are encouraged to combine efforts and use cross reference as appropriate.)
- The percentage of credit hours earned by non-majors can be determined through an analysis of students enrolled in a random sample of sections or by requesting

information from the College Technology and Data Coordinator. All data requests must be made with reasonable consideration of time and with sufficient specificity (e.g., specific course indications and time ranges for data).

- Specialized student support services (e.g., tutoring, math lab, etc.)

Program Reputation

Your discussion may be informed by some of the following:

- Department annual reports
- Senior exit survey
- Faculty/staff survey
- Focus groups
- Department faculty elected or appointed to college and university leadership positions
- Faculty/staff/student awards and nominations, including Fulbright Awards, ONCA awards, campus awards, student scholarships (undergraduate or graduate), etc.
- Off campus faculty or department reputation through:
  - national rankings of programs (if available)
  - external grants and contracts awarded
  - faculty participation on professional association committees, governing boards, or officer positions
  - disciplinary awards received
  - invitations to speak or lecture elsewhere
  - reviews of faculty-authored books
  - faculty publications (impact factors)
  - news media coverage
  - awards for community service.

Evaluate the program's role in the college and the university
See notes on the VOD and Touchstone Program in the "Common reports and availability" section of this document.

Common areas of discussion

- Curricular and planning structure within the department with examples
- Demographics of the faculty, staff, and students in relation to diversity
- Faculty service on committees outside the department. Possibilities include service on the College Curriculum Committee, Academic Council, General Education Committee, and ad hoc committees focusing on relevant subjects. Service on college-wide teacher education, graduate programs, and assessment committees may be relevant here;
- Formalized international exchange programs, two+two agreements with technical colleges, cooperative placements and/or formalized community service arrangements;
- Initiatives in the department or related centers/programs focused on the recruitment and retention of individuals from underrepresented populations;
- Efforts focused on student success and degree attainment;
- Jointly planned curricular initiatives which might include creation of multidisciplinary courses or population specific courses

Possible data sources
- departmental and faculty annual reports
- agendas and minutes from committee meetings
- leadership positions on committees and working groups

Discuss program outcomes (Goals and Objectives) as reported in OARS, Annual Reports, and Action Plans
Unless otherwise noted, the documentation required for this section should be in departmental annual reports, annual assessment reports, and department records, such as meeting minutes. All referenced resources should be included in the appendix and with an overall summary across years included in the narrative section. Departments are encouraged to consider focusing here on information outside of the annual assessment reports and use the section below specifically mentioning OARS to discuss annual assessment.

See notes on the VOD and Touchstone Program in the "Common reports and availability" section of this document.

Common areas of discussion
- Reference to later discussion of annual assessment processes
- List all SLOs and program goals used during the reporting cycle
- Aggregated program data with discussion
- Specific examples of assessment use for program change (can include both micro-change not requiring curriculum action and macro-change that resulted in redesigned courses and/or programs)

Evaluate the role and achievement of students in the program.
This section should include qualitative and quantitative measures of student participation in the program and the department's community as well as students' collective and individual achievements.
Common areas of discussion and data presented
- Advising surveys or check lists
- Specialized advising provided in the department
- Discussion of student boards or groups (e.g., a chair's advisory board, student membership on major department committees, honor society activities, and peer advising)
- Student services (i.e. tutoring, study space, etc.)
- Awards – including scholarships, publications or presentations, appearances on the Dean's List or President's List and the like.
- Student performance related to SLOs included in annual assessment reports (these link directly to ULCs)

Provide assessment data on student learning outcomes (SLOs) referencing documentation in the academic program's Online Assessment Plan and Improvement Reporting System (OARS).
Use this section to summarize annual assessment work from a multi-year perspective

Assess program faculty members.
This is a summary of faculty engagement and qualifications.
Possible data sources
- If updated, Activity Insight can provide
  - Total counts of faculty publications and presentations
  - Catalog of service (i.e. professional stewardship and community service) will be much easier.
  - Summary of faculty awards
  - Focus groups, testimonials, and alumni surveys
  - Comparative analysis of a sample of CVs from one or one or two peer institutions
  - Faculty experience expectations/goals related to or set by professional organizations

Evaluate the quality and quantity of academic support:
Possible data sources
- List of library resources from Dacus
- Access to leading publications in field
- Lists of suggested resources from professional associations
- In the future, the professional development needs reported by faculty through Activity Insight

Documentation
Possible data sources
- CVs are collected and cataloged in the PICs system, but may not be the most recent version.
- In time, Activity Insight
- The Data and Technology Coordinator
- Large department may consider sampling techniques to develop a general notion of impact

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