

Academic Program Review and Planning Guidelines

Introduction:

The program-review process is designed to serve several objectives—in particular,

- To provide an initial overview of the state of departments within Academic Affairs to assist in the strategic planning process for the division, and to assist in a possible reallocation/realignment of available resources.
 - Note that this initial overview will be based on the past three years of data requested.
- To assist in preparation for the upcoming self-study and site visit required for continuing accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission [HLC, a division of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, our institutional accrediting body].
- To assist departments in a comprehensive review and subsequent on-going review and improved planning process. And
- To accomplish the above objectives without creating substantial additional paperwork for departments (e.g., it is anticipated that the program review and planning documents will supplant portions, at least, of this year’s “Annual Report” and “Annual Plan” process for each department/college and serve as more useful review and planning tools).

As noted in the companion document, “The Academic Strategic Plan: Outline of Process,” the University’s Centennial Strategic Plan—including the University’s Mission and Vision statements—forms a basis for planning and program review. Another basis is the Higher Learning Commission’s “Criteria for Accreditation, which are organized under five headings (see <http://www.ysu.edu/accreditation/Resources/Chapter 3 Criteria.doc> for details and core components of each criterion):

- Mission and Integrity
- Preparing for the Future
- Student Learning and Effective Teaching
- Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge
- Engagement and Service.

You will be asked to address portions of the Centennial Strategic Plan and the Higher Learning Commission criteria in the program-review and planning processes. (The Centennial Strategic Plan is available at <http://www.ysu.edu/strategicplan/>.)

Process:

In particular, each department is asked to engage in review and planning and to create two documents, the first of which is a program-review document (maximum of 25 pages excluding attachments) that provides information requested below. [The second document is the unit

strategic plan; details of that process are discussed separately in the document entitled “The Academic Strategic Plan: Outline of Process.”]

As you discuss the items listed under “Items to Address,” outlined later in these “Academic Program Review and Planning Guidelines,” provide specific examples of how the department’s goals and activities are linked to:

- Criterion 3 of the Higher Learning Commission “Criteria for Accreditation,” including examples of how the department addresses or supports each of the four core components under Criterion 3 (3a. “The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible”; 3b. “The organization values and supports effective teaching”; 3c. “The organization creates effective learning environments”; 3d. “The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.”)
- One *additional* criterion of the Higher Learning Commission (with a focus on just one core component of that criterion). You may choose from Criterion 1. Mission and Integrity; 2. Preparing for the Future; 4. Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge; or 5. Engagement and Service.
- Critical Issue 2 of YSU’s Centennial Strategic Plan—Promoting Excellence in Programs/Teaching, Learning, and Research: “YSU will promote excellence in teaching, learning, service, and research—and prepare students to undertake civic and leadership responsibilities—through programs and educational experiences that meet student and workforce needs.” A copy of the full strategic plan is available at http://www.yzu.edu/strategicplan/Strategic_Plan_Packet2.pdf.

Where applicable, you may refer to data provided in the Institutional Research template, as well as to Institutional Research and departmental website information. The attached checklist/resource guide may help you map items to the Strategic Plan and to the Higher Learning Commission criteria. **You do not necessarily have to discuss in your program review document each item that is listed under the headings below, nor do you need to repeat in one section information that you have discussed in another. Select the items in each section that are significant for your own department’s program review and planning. Please note that the checklist referred to above is not a formal part of the review process; it is provided only to assist departments as they conceptualize the potential elements of a review.**

Items to Address (in Conjunction with HLC Criteria and Strategic Plan Critical Issue 2):

1. General Department Information

- Mission Statement

- Department Vision Statement
- Department Core Values
- Departmental Governance Document
- Brief overview of department (programs offered, when started; new programs; programs pending, etc.)
- How the department fits into the University's overall mission
- Role of the department with respect to outreach and engagement with the community
- Other (e.g., specific information that pertains to the department but that may not be applicable to other departments within our division)

2. Specific Department Information

- Data from Institutional Research (a comprehensive set of templates and data will be distributed by IR; IR has calculated much of the data for you)
 - Enrollment [here and elsewhere, data may be provided per program or per department, depending on what makes sense for any particular department]
 - Total
 - New students
 - Transfer students
 - Retention from year 1 to year 2
 - Number of majors
 - Diversity
 - Gender, age, ethnicity, etc.
 - Graduation rates
 - Credit-hour generation
 - In major
 - In "service" courses
 - Number of faculty
 - Full-time faculty
 - (Average) number part-time faculty
 - Diversity of faculty
 - Number of staff
 - Type of staff (e.g., clerical, technical, etc.)
 - Diversity of staff
 - Student/faculty ratio
 - Subsidy generation
 - Other revenue generation
 - Other

Note: for the next item, provide information at the aggregate department and/or program level, to avoid unnecessary duplication of other reports. Do not provide a detailed list of activities of each department member.

- Department
 - Recent accreditation activity (if applicable)
 - External recognition of department (e.g., any awards received by department from higher education or other organizations, etc.)
 - Research productivity
 - Development of new revenue-generating programs
 - Development and/or use of new course/program delivery methods
 - Other

- Faculty
 - Scholarly activities and productivity
 - Professional development activities
 - Teaching effectiveness (awards won by faculty in department, etc.)
 - Innovations in teaching
 - Use of IDL, other new teaching techniques
 - Service to profession/discipline
 - Service to University
 - Service to community

- Curriculum (Curricula)
 - Curriculum/curricular review processes in place
 - Program success metrics (e.g., relevant test data collected nationally)
 - Program currency: is the program redefining itself in the context of contemporary changes and technology? Are the courses appropriate? Is there a need for major revision(s) in the program(s)?
 - Graduate programs
 - Comparison to programs in other departments/institutions

- Students
 - Input data (trends of data on incoming students, new and transfer)
 - Developmental needs (i.e., to bring students up to standards required for program success)
 - Job placement rates
 - Alumni input
 - Performance in local, regional, national contests, competitions, other activities
 - Undergraduate students
 - Graduate students

- Need for Program

- Level of student interest and demand (trends, local and national)
- Enrollment trends
- Relation to institutional goals and Centennial Strategic Plan
- Fiscal and academic relationships between graduate and undergraduate programs
- Potential for cooperative program development
- Employment opportunities
- Graduation rates
- Alumni input

- Productivity and Innovation
 - Evaluation of resources available and utilized
 - Attraction of external grants and other resources
 - Collaborations with corporate or other community groups
 - Contributions to economic development of community (Northeast Ohio and beyond)
 - Collaborations with other departments/institutions
 - Development and effectiveness of articulation agreements with other educational institutions
 - Other

- Outcomes Assessment of Student Learning
 - Evaluation of methods and results of assessment of student learning outcomes
 - Use of and on-going review of assessment plans and assessment reports (attach copies).

- Items/information unique to your unit

Attach a copy of the most recent department graduate program review documents, where appropriate (parameters for graduate program review are already set as required at the state level).

Also attach an executive summary (one or two pages): Briefly describe:

1. Major accomplishments and strengths
2. Issues for the department's strategic plan emerging from the review process.