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Transition to unit review

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Goal. In pursuit of OSU's strategic goals of excellence, reviews should be **efficient and effective** in providing OSU leadership with clear insights about the strengths and weaknesses of units and leading to meaningful, lasting actions that improve the institution.

Note: we are replacing reviews of *programs* with more comprehensive reviews of *units*, to provide guidance to the unit heads, deans, and provost on making improvements to the overall functioning of the unit (primarily but not limited to its academic programs). The definition of a unit varies across campus; in general, it is the level at which the unit head controls the budget, hires faculty, etc. Proposed units are listed in section 7. For the purpose of unit review described here it will ultimately be the decision of the dean as to which level of organization will constitute a unit, and how to handle special circumstances like interdisciplinary programs.

How this will be used - don't be scared

Prod units to undertake strategic planning and big-picture thinking at a retreat

1. Rationale and prior work

We surveyed other large public universities and nearly all of them review all programs in a unit together; OSU is unusual in performing individual program reviews.

We tallied the costs in staff time, travel expense, and other costs, of performing program reviews and unit reviews. We estimate that a typical grad program review costs \$10-\$22K depending on program size. (We did not attempt to estimate costs of undergrad program reviews but they should be similar.) The largest single cost is the program director's time. We estimate that a typical unit review would cost \$17-\$36K depending on size and complexity, with a significantly reduced load on program heads who typically are expected to work at only a fraction of an FTE. We can substitute the current roster of ~140 program reviews with ~40 unit reviews, and simultaneously move toward performing reviews every 7 years instead of every 10, for a net reduction in reviews per year of roughly a factor of 3 and a cost savings of roughly 50% ($0.25 \times 1.5 \times 10/7$) (number of reviews per cycle times cost per review times frequency of review).

In spring 2019 Grad Council approved substituting accreditation review for program review, with the proviso that the Graduate School may request additional information from the program and an action plan will still be written by the program and reviewed by Grad Council. The Grad Council memo notes that accreditation may focus on program outcomes and be less focused on internal functioning; and also that accreditation may focus on one degree type and additional review may be needed for non-accredited degree types and also interactions among accredited and non-accredited degrees. At the undergrad level, accreditation already substitutes for program reviews; we will include accreditation, but because this is a unit review it will include additional information. Details of the review process for units with accredited programs are being worked out with those units.

We discussed the unit review idea with grad program heads and associate deans in spring 2019, with the chair of grad council in summer 2019, and with deans in September 2019, and received no negative comments. An earlier version of this document was circulated to all deans and academic associate deans for comment in October 2019. A few colleagues have expressed concern that either the graduate or undergraduate program(s) might receive too little

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attention; we expect that through careful selection of reviewers and instruction to the review teams, every aspect of the unit will be given adequate attention.

2. Proposed approach to unit review

- a. **Reviewers** will be selected by the Provost with input from key stakeholders. Grad Council and Curriculum Council will each nominate one internal reviewer who will be tenure-line faculty; units will recommend 2-6 external reviewers (depending on the size and complexity of the unit) and will include a rationale for each recommended reviewer. Reviewers should collectively cover the broad areas of expertise in the unit, and should have prior experience with academic leadership at the department level or above, because they will need both subject matter expertise and institutional expertise. The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School may add one or more external reviewers, confer with the dean of the College, and pass their recommendations to the Provost, who will make the final selection. The objective is to assemble a review team who can, together, comment intelligently on the entire unit, its broad areas of expertise, its research portfolio; Extension, engagement and outreach if applicable; and its undergraduate and graduate programs, including interdisciplinary programs (with special effort to understand the unit's contributions to those). Note that the number of reviewers may vary with the size and complexity of the unit, from 4-5 for a small department to 8 for a large complex school.

Internal reviewers - opportunity for professional/leadership development

- b. **Central data gathering.** In a major shift from current program reviews, replacing the self-study, **a central effort** will gather information available **internally** that illuminates the health of programs and units and be presented to the unit as a draft report. The data template is attached at the end of this document. Unit leaders will review and discuss the draft data report.
- c. **Succinct self-study.** Unit heads, in consultation with faculty, program heads, and appropriate stakeholders, will consider the data document from step 2b, and provide (and develop, if necessary) a self study. The template is attached to the end of this document.
- d. **Directed questions for review team.** The Vice Provosts for Undergraduate and graduate education, the unit head, and the dean look at the body of material in b and c, and formulate key questions for the review team. The reviewers will be given the information compiled in b and c (respecting privacy as required), along with the key questions and careful guidance about the scope and expectations of the review. An irreplaceable contribution of the external reviewers are the comparisons with norms in the fields in the unit, and in addition to addressing specific questions posed by the unit, the review team should also address the following:
- What is distinctive about OSU's programs in this unit, vis-à-vis those of its peers? Are they relevant, and are enrollment trends and demographics in line with expectations? Does it meet the standards of the discipline and should it continue?
 - Are the elements (e.g. areas of expertise, academic programs) within the unit well connected, leveraging the opportunities afforded by their proximity?
 - Is the curriculum up to date and reflecting best practices?
 - How does the unit's visibility and metrics of success compare with those of appropriate peers? For large or complex units, how do the elements of the unit (e.g. political science faculty in the School of Public Policy) compare with peers?

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- Are program-level assessments of student learning appropriate, attainable, and adequately reviewed on a regular basis by program faculty and are the programs responsive to recommendations?
- What strategies and resources would improve this unit, relative to its peers?

e. **Site visit.** An extremely valuable feature of the review is the input from faculty, staff, and students in the unit, whose voices need to be heard in addition to the compilations in b and c. Their observations can help the review team assess the health and viability of the program. For smaller units, remote participation by reviewers should be considered. As is the case now with program reviews, units will still be responsible for the expense of the review.

f. **Report and action plan.** The review report should directly address the specific questions in (d), and recommendations for improving the unit should be presented in the form of a summary sentence and supporting paragraph(s). Program heads and unit head should work together to write an action plan that addresses each recommendation.

3. Accreditation as substitution for program review

Moving toward unit review, careful comparison will be needed of accreditation requirements and program review requirements. While it may be more efficient to augment accreditation with an additional effort aimed at satisfying internal requirements (in the spirit of the new Grad Council policy), there may be good reasons to separate the processes: currently, accredited undergrad programs are not currently reviewed separately, the effort to provide additional information at roughly the same time as accreditation may be too onerous, or the alignment of reviews with accreditation schedules may not be feasible. Deans of colleges with accreditation will be consulted in the next month to determine an optimal path for each such unit.

Two units will undergo accreditation review in spring 2020, so this academic year will also provide the opportunity to design unit review in tandem with accreditation.

4. Potential metrics

See 2b above: note that data gathering will be primarily performed by a central office. Data will be normally reported over the past 10 years.

Input assessment

Number of faculty (TT/instructional), FTE, recent history of teaching, and typical teaching load per faculty in unit

Research inputs (grant \$)

Revenue from other (non-research) external sources, Ecampus, INTO, and professional masters program(s), if any

Finances: operation expenditures on teaching, admin, and research; services & supplies; revenue by category (E&G, sponsored research, etc), and how the budget has changed over the past 10 years

Facilities: classroom, lab, and office space controlled by the unit

Productivity assessment

Course enrollment, frequency taught, rank of instructor (GTA through professor), enrollment major/nonmajor, SCH by category; courses not taught but still in catalog; DFW rates

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- Undergrad first-year retention rate, 6-year completion rate, by demographic; grad completion rate (4-MS 8-PhD); time to degree; attrition
- Research outputs (grants, papers, books, etc, from Academic Analytics and other sources)
- Demographics of students in unit including gender, citizenship, residency, race/ethnicity, Pell eligibility, incoming GPA, admitted/applied and matriculated/admitted ratio, participation rates in first-year experience courses
- Student honors/awards, scholarly papers/presentations, and/or undergraduate involvement (numbers and percent) in research, internships, experiential learning, and other high-impact practices
- Enrollment data (past and projected) for degree options and certificates, including all locations and modes of delivery; compare with university, college, and other similar programs if available
- Degrees and certificates (if applicable) awarded per year for the past 10 years, by location and mode of delivery
- Licensure exam data (if applicable)

Outcomes assessment

- Student/graduate learning outcomes - recent history of recommendations to programs by APA and GS, and responses from programs.
- Graduate/alumni employability (e.g. from Burning Glass)
- Post-graduation data (If available): Employment demographics, satisfaction surveys, alumni surveys, employer assessment
- Faculty productivity - Academic analytics?
- National rankings (if applicable)
- Community engagement (if applicable)
- Comparison with other units in Oregon public universities (if applicable)

Special focus on interdisciplinary programs

5. AY20: the year of transition

We considered programs scheduled for review or accreditation this year and found that it is an ideal year to transition to unit review. The only non-accredited programs up for review this year, other than a new (5-year) program, are Agricultural Science and Ag Education which are the only programs in the Department of Agricultural Education and Sciences. So it is the simplest possible unit for review. We will review them together for the first time, as a beta test, while we refine the long-term plan and fully engage campus partners (see item 4).

In addition, the College of Business has accreditation reviews scheduled for 2020. (Education’s programs were scheduled for 2020 but were postponed.) This will be our first opportunity to conduct reviews in concert with accreditation, and learn how to effectively augment accreditation review in a way that brings most value to the university in informing improvement.

6. Managing the change

Step	Preparation	Key partner	Timeline	Outcome needed
√Overarching principles	Questions for Ed	Ed F	August	Rough plan for 9/5

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Step	Preparation	Key partner	Timeline	Outcome needed
√Deans buy-in	Presentation	deans	Sept 5-6	Agreement on big picture
√Engage AY20 units (see #3)	Draft process description (#1&2 above)	√Ag Ed&Sci & CAS leadership; COB leadership	Fall	Refined process description
/Develop detailed process	Refined process description	Deans, ADs, program heads, grad council, curr council, unit heads	Fall	Improved process description, draft template
/Resolve key questions	Questions re data, unit definition, accreditation	Ed, selected deans, ? on data	Oct/Nov	Near-final list of data, list of units, resolution of accreditation
Timeline and template for each review		Ag Ed & Sci	Fall	Near-final timeline and template
Approvals	Detailed process and schedule	Grad Council, Curriculum Council, Fac Senate Exec	Fall	Approval, buy-in, helpful changes, recommendations on campus engagement
Campus engagement	Complete process description; slides	Invite faculty & program heads	Winter	none
Develop schedule for AY21-33	draft schedule	Associate deans	Winter	Final schedule AY21->
Address staffing needs	Workflow doc and staffing need	Ed, Sherm?, our staff	Winter/spring	New funding
Prepare AY21 reviewees	Complete process description	Units involved (engineering, PHHS, Education)	Winter	All their questions answered

7. List of units (draft)

College of Agricultural Sciences

Department of Applied Economics
 Department of Agricultural Education and Agricultural Sciences
 Department of Animal and Rangeland Sciences
 Department of Botany and Plant Pathology
 Department of Crop and Soil Science
 Department of Biological and Ecological Engineering
 Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
 Department of Food Science and Technology

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Department of Horticulture
Department of Environmental and Molecular Toxicology
Nondepartmental programs (Bioresource research, sustainability, bioenergy)

√College of Business

Business, design, hospitality mgt (at Cascades)

College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences

College of Education

√College of Engineering

School of Chemical, Biological and Environmental Engineering
School of Civil and Construction Engineering
School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
School of Mechanical, Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering
School of Nuclear Science and Engineering
Department of Biological and Ecological Engineering
Robotics & Material science are the biggest IDPs;

College of Forestry

Department of Forest Ecosystems and Society
Department of Forest Engineering, Resources and Management
Department of Wood Science and Engineering

College of Liberal Arts

School of Arts and Communications (being reorganized)
School of History, Philosophy and Religion
School of Language, Culture and Society
School of Public Policy
School of Writing, Literature and Film
Other programs (American Studies, Liberal Studies, Social Science, Environmental Arts and Humanities)

College of Pharmacy

Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences

√College of Public Health and Human Sciences (review the college)

School of Biological and Population Health Sciences
School of Social and Behavioral Sciences

College of Science

School of Life Sciences
Department of Chemistry
Department of Mathematics
Department of Physics
Department of Statistics

Graduate School