

Date: October 8, 2018

To: Academic Policies Committee

From: Mary Hoffman, Academic Planning and Assessment

RE: Recommended changes to FASRP and Academic Department/Program Review Policy

In preparation for HLC reaffirmation during fall semester 2019, I have identified two policy issues that should be resolved to ensure we are following best practices. The first involves alterations to the Faculty and Academic Staff Rules and Policies. The second amends an APC approved policy document.

I. Overview of Course requirements, FASRP (Article 6, Section B), p. 130.

Existing Language:

Overview of Courses

Each instructor will provide students with a written general chronological outline of topics for a course, its approximate timetable for major projects, and the instructor's method for evaluation of student achievement. (FS 11/80, US 3/10) In addition, instructors should be sensitive to the student time constraints when scheduling tests during the week prior to final examinations. (FS 5/83)

Proposed Language:

Revise first sentence to read: Each instructor will provide students with a written list of student learning outcomes for the course, Liberal Education Core learning outcomes met by the course (where relevant), general chronological outline of topics, an approximate timetable for major projects, and the instructor's method for evaluation of student achievement.

Rationale: HLC considers it best practice to identify course-level student learning outcomes in syllabi. Course level student learning outcomes allow us to support our compliance with Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support and Criterion 4: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement. It is also best practice to identify Liberal Education Core learning outcomes in syllabi in order to support compliance with the same HLC criteria.

Implications: Faculty and instructional academic staff have already been asked to include course-level learning outcomes on syllabi being collected for HLC review. They have been asked to include LE outcomes for several years. This language change would align policy with these changes in practice.

II. Process and Procedures for Academic Department/Program Review

Existing Language: Document Attached "Process and Procedures for Academic Department/Program Review" (approved by APC 10/27/15)

A. Revise responsible Academic Affairs representative

Proposed Language: Change references to AVC to “Academic Affairs”

Rationale: to allow additional flexibility in who facilitates the process and to match current practice of coordination of program review by the assessment director

Implications: None anticipated

B. Revise process to include an abbreviated review process for programs with external accreditation

Proposed Language: In the academic year following initial accreditation or reaffirmation, each accredited program will submit their accreditation self-study, final reviewer report, revised assessment plans, and a brief internal report to Academic Affairs. Institutional review of accredited programs will begin at the Dean response step as outlined below.

Rationale: It is important that externally accredited programs have institutional-level review. This process allows APC and administrators to consider external accretitor recommendations and provide feedback. It also creates accountability for programs to align with university goals and provides documentation of institutional review of all programs. This is keeping with HLC Criterion 4.A.1: “The institution makes a practice of regular program reviews.”

Implications: This will increase workload to a degree for accredited programs, for Academic Affairs, and for APC. The process is designed to limit the extra work for programs (no additional self-study, no review committees). Because programs will be reviewed only following initial accreditation or reaffirmation, this will add 1-2 programs to APC’s annual review process in some years.