

SAMPLE DEPARTMENTAL/PROGRAM REVIEW TEAM OUESTIONS

The following questions were developed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) to serve as a **resource only** for departmental/program reviews. They are offered as an **optional tool** to be utilized with external reviewers. However, OIE recognizes that external review teams may ask any questions as they see fit relative to content of the self-study.

Context

The purpose of the academic program review is to assess:

- 1. The program's contribution to the vision, mission and values of the University, specifically as outlined in BGSU's strategic plan;
- 2. The quality of the program curriculum, faculty, and students (inclusive of targeted and anticipated goals and outcomes);
- 3. The program's current resources, sustainability and its administration;
- 4. The department/program's action plan for the next six years.

Mission and Overview

- 1. Is the department/program's mission clearly aligned with the University's mission and strategic priorities? Does the program effectively educate leaders who will contribute to the common good? Leaders who are focused on the future and embrace a mindset anchored in a purposeful and meaningful life?
- 2. Are the department/program's mission, goals and student learning outcomes clearly articulated and communicated to faculty, students and staff as well as other campus constituencies?
- 3. What makes the department/program distinctive (in the field and/or on campus)? What is the department/program's reputation in the field?
- 4. Who does the department/program see as current peers/competitors? What trends are emerging within the department/program's discipline and do these trends warrant the need for a change in mission?
- 5. What leadership changes have recently occurred? How have these impacted the department/program's effectiveness?
- 6. How is the department/program organized in its operations and functions? Do faculty and staff (tenure, non-tenured, adjunct, etc.) and students participate in department/program administration/governance? What is the relationship of department/program leadership with other campus administrative units?

Goals

1. After reading the departmental/program self-study and conducting a site visit, how would you characterize the quality and performance of the department/program?

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2. Overall, how does this program compare to other programs within the state and nationally, specifically their peers and competitors?

Curriculum and Instruction/ Teaching and Learning

1. How is educational quality defined and assessed?

- 2. What are the enrollment, retention and graduation rates and trends for the department/program's curriculum?
- 3. Does the department/program's curriculum provide breadth, depth, and challenge in the light of current scholarship and trends?
- 4. Does the department/program's curriculum educate students in the values, knowledge and skills appropriate to the discipline?
- 5. Has the curriculum kept pace with developments in the field? How does the curriculum compare with those of comparable institutions?
- 6. Does the department/program provide a stimulating, challenging learning environment for all students?
- 7. Does the department/program have adequate procedures in place to determine whether it is meeting its instructional goals/learning outcomes and objectives and to determine and refine curricular content?
- 8. Does the program appear to have adequate human and fiscal resources (support staff, space, laboratories, computer technology, equipment, income and expense budgets, etc.)? Is the program supported with sufficient leadership at the program, College, and University levels?
- 9. What are the department/program's efforts to ensure quality and viability (recruitment/retention)? What are the department/program's efforts to track student graduation and placement? What efforts does the department/program make to recruit and retain underrepresented students? What processes and/or procedures exist to ensure the "right fit" of students and program?
- 10. What are the department/program's efforts to ensure instructional effectiveness? What is the department/program's philosophy for who teaches which courses? How is faculty load determined? Has the department/program implemented new instructional strategies and to what effect? Are all instructors properly credentialed? Offered training opportunities?

Undergraduate Programs

- 1. What percentage of students complete their degrees and how long do these students typically take? How do these data points compare to students at other institutions?
- 2. Does the undergraduate program have a coherent design characterized by continuity, breadth, sequential progression, and a synthesis of learning? What are the findings of an analysis of the content and organization of the curriculum? Are the instructional goals of the program appropriate for the students?
- 3. Does the program have appropriate and measurable learning outcomes?
- 4. Do the courses offered in the various modes of instruction (lecture, seminar, laboratory, clinical practice, fieldwork, etc.) provide an appropriate balance for the instructional program?
- 5. Do courses effectively include use of instructional media, computers, and other modern technologies and employ innovative teaching strategies?
- 6. Does the advising of students seem appropriate and effective?
- 7. What is the overall quality of the undergraduate program?

Graduate Program

- 1. How does the structure of the graduate program (process of admission, course requirements, evaluation) compare to other graduate programs nationally? How does the quality of the graduate program compare with the high-ranking programs in other institutions?
- 2. Does the program have appropriate and measurable learning outcomes?
- 3. What percentage of students complete their degrees and how long do these students typically take to complete these degrees? How do these data points compare to students at other institutions?

- 4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this program?
- 5. Do the department's proposals for improving the graduate program seem effective?
- 6. What are the future demand for graduate students in the academic and professional areas covered by the program?
- 7. What is the overall quality of the graduate program?

Assessment

- 1. Is the department/program assessment plan comprehensive enough? Are there key program outcomes that the department has not evaluated and should be evaluated in the next assessment cycle?
- 2. Are there "best assessment practices or methods" that the program should consider using to measure its success in achieving its program learning objectives?
- 3. Does the department/program effectively use student learning outcome data and other data points to improve the overall quality of the program?

Faculty and Scholarly Contribution and Collaboration

- 1. What are the findings relative to faculty demographic data contained in the departmental/program self-study? What efforts does the program make to recruit and retain underrepresented faculty and staff? Have there been significant hires or losses recently (within the reporting cycle)?
- 2. What awards have faculty and staff received?
- 3. How does the faculty compare to faculty at other institutions in terms of their contributions to scholarship and creative work; teaching; and service to students, the profession, and community?
- 4. Is the faculty sufficiently active in research or creative work to support superior academic programs?
- 5. To what extent is the scholarly and/or creative work of the faculty integrated into the department's graduate and undergraduate programs? What are the research strengths of the department/program? How well do they align with the department/program's mission? How do research and creative activities compare to peers?
- 6. How appropriate is the balance of faculty with respect to senior and junior appointments, diversity, and full-time vs. part-time appointments?
- 7. How are junior faculty mentored?
- 8. What are the department/program's efforts with regard to professional development and growth, particularly among junior faculty?
- 9. What are the findings relative to faculty workloads and the balance between teaching, research and service responsibilities?
- 10. What percentage of courses is taught by adjuncts and graduate assistants? How does the department/program assure the improvement and quality of instruction from adjuncts and GAs?

Students

- 1. Does the program provide a rich learning environment and distinctive education in the discipline? Does it prepare students to make a meaningful contribution to society? In what ways does this department/program provide the best possible educational experience for students? In what ways does this department/program promote student learning and success?
- 2. Does the performance of students, as evidenced by papers, course examinations, comprehensive examinations, theses or other projects indicate satisfactory preparation in the discipline? How does the department/program encourage students' scholarly work and production? What are the findings

- relative to the effectiveness of student participation in the academic life of the program, including undergraduate research and other opportunities for student/faculty collaborative work?
- 3. What efforts are made to create an intellectual and social climate that fosters student development and learning (e.g. clubs, student chapters of professional organizations, etc.)?
- 4. What is the nature of the department/program's academic and career advising efforts? Does the program effectively monitor student academic progress and assist underperforming majors?
- 5. How is student satisfaction assessed and how are results used to make department/programmatic decisions?
- 6. What opportunities are students given to learn about options after graduation in the department/program's discipline?
- 7. Have there been changes in the quality of the student body?
- 8. What significant awards have students received? How prepared are students upon program completion? What evidence is there of such? Have students had any major impact on the field (professionally or academically)?

Diversity

- 1. In what ways does the work of this department/program reflect and foster understanding of the diversity of our society and campus community? What are the findings relative to the department/program's diversity in terms of faculty, students and staff? How do these findings compare with departments at the very best institutions?
- 2. Does the program effectively promote diversity and build awareness of and sensitivity to multicultural issues?
- 3. How does the department/program foster and encourage intellectual diversity?
- 4. How does the department/program encourage a global perspective among its faculty and students? What partnerships exist at the national and international level? What impact have these collaborations had on department/program's effectiveness and reputation?

Facilities and Resources

- 1. How does the total amount of resources provided to the department/program compare with those at similar institutions?
- 2. What is the department/program's assessment of its most pressing equipment and resource needs? What kinds of space and/or facility issues does the department/program face? What are the projections for future needs?
- 3. Does the department/program have adequate support staff?
- 4. How well do the university's computer hardware and software policies and campus support for technology meet the department/program's current and future needs?
- 5. What additional resources and facilities, if any, are needed to improve the quality of the programs being offered? How does the department/program use various campus support services (and which) to enhance its effectiveness?
- 6. What is the department/program's funding mix (scholarships, tuition, grants, etc...)? How does the department/program assess how well it uses available funding and human resources?

Conclusions, Action Plans and Future Developments

- 1. What are the department/program's strengths? In what ways could the department/program be considered a leader in its field?
- 2. What are the department/program's challenges and opportunities? What are the department/program's weaknesses and where could it most improve? What further challenges do

- you foresee the department/program facing in the coming years? What changes will occur in your field over the next five to ten years that will impact the future direction of the department/program? What do you see as the major obstacles that impede the department/program's progress?
- 3. How would you describe the morale and atmosphere within the department/program? Does the department/program enjoy the kind of collegiality among its members and other university members that is conducive to sustaining and enhancing its excellence?
- 4. What are the findings relative to the department/program's integrated plan for improvement over the next five years?
- 5. Based on the findings of this self-study, what should be the core objectives and priorities for the department/program over the next five years?
- 6. What are the risks (health and safety, financial, reputation, etc.) this department/program assumes through its programs, services, and staffing? In what ways do staff from this department/program mitigate these risks?