

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee
From: Provost Stephen Scheck and Dr. Sue Monahan
Date: March 3, 2017
Re: Response to questions about Program review and self-study schedule and process

Dear President Schepige,

We have responded to the Executive Committee's questions in red below.

1. Please provide specific references to the external policies or guidelines that require WOU to do programmatic self-study. In particular, please provide references for the underlined portions of the draft policy note here:

DRAFT-Program-review-policy-2-9-17.pdf

Rationale: ...While required by NWCCU, academic program review is, first and foremost, for the benefit of WOU programs and the students we serve, ensuring that we engage in systematic inquiry into the effectiveness of our academic programs and use findings to improve.

Scope: Academic programs include majors, minors, certificates and all general education options at the graduate and undergraduate levels as well as academic support services

Academic program review is referenced in NWCCU Accreditation Standards, WOU's Strategic Plan, and WOU's Year 1 Report to NWCCU (regarding Mission Fulfillment).

NWCCU 4.A.2: The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its **programs and services**, wherever offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services.

WOU Strategic Plan II.4.2: Develop internal processes that regularly review academic programs to ensure academic effectiveness, relevance, quality and currency.

WOU Year 1 Report to NWCCU Indicator 11: Completion of program reviews per seven-year program review schedule.

2. Please present a simple timeline for the program review process, including:

1. Will these be department or division self-studies? Can there be a choice - that is, for division with smaller departments, can they choose to do a division self-study rather than each department?

A self-study document may (indeed probably will) combine multiple programs in a single department or division. That said, each program will engage in the *process* of self-study so that it can contribute to the appropriate divisional and/or multi-program self-study. Clusters of programs are being determined through consultation with deans, division chairs and heads/coordinators.

2. What is the seven year rotation schedule? Who sets this schedule and when will this schedule be published?

This schedule is in development, and will be determined by the Office of Academic Affairs after consultation with deans, departments and divisions regarding (1) appropriate clusters of programs to be reviewed together, and (2) factors that may affect the appropriateness of academic program review in a given year.

A simple timeline for the program review process:

1. Program is notified of upcoming review (prior year)
2. Program prepares self-study
3. Reviewers visit and provide feedback to program
4. Program prepares an action plan (a strategic plan) based on self-study and review

Specifically how programs time these steps is flexible. Activities can commence at a time appropriate for the program. But the review process (steps 2-4) should be completed within one academic year.

3. How does the posted self-study document align with providing evidence of WOU's abilities to address NWCCU standards? Where is this alignment posted for faculty review?

The self-study template aligns with the NWCCU Indicators of Mission Fulfillment regarding Academic Excellence and Student Success, which was drawn from WOU's Strategic Plan.

4. Since this is a new faculty policy, per the WOU Policy Council, it should be "vetted in the usual way" before inclusion in our Faculty Handbook.

We realize that we are not voting on "should there be program review" but rather on the specific language and process that we include, as WOU policy, in the Faculty Handbook.

We would like to make sure what goes in the handbook aligns with our NWCCU accreditation requirements and also addresses our institutional priorities.

The university will develop an institutional policy on Academic Program Review. In the spirit and tradition of shared governance, feedback and comment has been solicited through Faculty Senate, LAS and COE Division Chairs, and meetings with program heads/chairs/coordinators and other faculty engaged in conversations about assessment and Academic Effectiveness. The final policy draft will then be submitted to the University Policy Council for adoption as a university policy. The policy can also be included in the Faculty Handbook, should Faculty Senate wish for it to be included.

As noted at The February 28th Faculty Senate meeting. Planning for academic program review can and will progress while the ultimate policy is in process of formal adoption.