Appendix U: Academic Program Review Process

Responsibility of a Program’s Administrator and Faculty

The administrator and faculty of each program develop a plan for the program. The elements of the plan include a mission and a set of program goals. Program goals include goals related to quality (e.g., excellence in teaching), curriculum, kinds and number of students to be served, adaptations or expansion of the program, etc. In relation to each goal the plan should specify outcome-oriented objectives, targets and planned activities to achieve the objectives.

A program plan must also specify ways to measure the success of the program administrator and faculty in achieving the objectives and/or reaching program goals. Ways of measuring the achievements of each outcome-oriented objective may include both impressionistic techniques (peer visits to instructors’ classrooms, for example, or individual interviews with graduating students) and quantitative measures such as analyses of alumni surveys or quantitative evaluations of teaching effectiveness.

Thus, each unit develops a plan including the following:

- Program mission
- Program goals
- Outcome-oriented objectives
- Targets
- Planned activities to achieve the objectives
- Measurements of success

Discussing, depositing and maintaining the plan: As the program plan is developed and amended, the program administrator and faculty discuss the plan with the appropriate Chair and/or Dean. The program administrator deposits a copy (or copies) of the plan and amendments to the plan with the appropriate Chair and/or Dean. The appropriate Dean maintains a file of plans for all programs in the College/School, including annual amendments to the plan.

Collecting data: Program administrators and faculty perform activities intended to achieve program goals and objectives. In order to assess program effectiveness and measure the success of activities intended to further program goals, the program administrator regularly collects and maintains appropriate files of information. Most program administrators will maintain files relating to multiple means of assessing success in achieving program goals.

All programs will regularly collect information relating to student numbers (course enrollments, numbers of graduates attempting/completing the program, class sizes), information collected by surveying program alumni, and information about program costs.

Since the programs vary greatly in size, complexity, mission activities, and needs, the data collected and maintained by different programs will also vary greatly. The following list of means of assessing program effectiveness, adapted from a list developed by the Dean’s Council
of the College of Arts and Sciences, includes kinds of data that undergraduate programs have found useful in assessment.

Associated Colleges of the Chicago Area (ACCA) programming, context and symposia
Alumni surveys and other information from alumni (including College surveys,
departmental surveys, focus interviews, logs of informal feedback from alumni)
Artistic performances
Course histories
Employer surveys
Foreign Chamber of Commerce examinations
Faculty self-assessments
Grade analysis
Graduate School applications; both quantitative and qualitative information
Job placement information
Language proficiency examinations (oral and written)
Major field achievement tests
Number of graduates
Practical internships or field work, including both qualitative and quantitative information
Professional certification
Proficiency examinations
Senior experiences specific to the field: senior seminars, comprehensive examinations,
independent projects, reading lists, recitals
Student ratings of teaching effectiveness summaries
Standardized tests (GRE, GMAT, LSAT, CPA)
Student interviews/surveys
Student portfolios/video assessments

**Participating in the five-year review process** (described below).
Processes and Procedures: Five-Year Program Review

Note: The five-year program review process assumes the administrator and faculty of each unit have developed and maintained a program plan and collected data during the period since the last review of the program. Much of the information useful for the assessment of programs is available in Dominican University’s institutional database (on reserve in the library).

1. Programs are reviewed on a rotating basis by the Program Review Committee; each program is reviewed every five years.

2. The Provost notifies the program administrator of a scheduled review one year in advance of the review.

3. The program administrator and faculty of the program to be reviewed submit a review plan and a self-study outline to the Provost and the Program Review Committee six months before the review.

4. The program administrator and faculty complete a self-study, including both a written report and a summary presentation of evidence/data.

5. The program administrator and faculty select an outside reviewer in consultation with the Provost, who makes arrangements for the reviewer’s visit; the program administrator and faculty host the reviewer’s visit.

6. The outside reviewer submits an evaluation report; copies are sent to the program administrator and faculty, and to the Provost.

7. The program administrator submits the self-study, the outside reviewer’s report, and the program faculty’s response to the report to the Provost and to the Program Review Committee.

8. The Program Review Committee prepares a response to these documents, discusses its response with the program administrator and faculty, and returns the response to the Provost, the appropriate Dean, the appropriate Chair, and to the program administrator and program faculty.
Sample Outline: Five-Year Review Self-Study

Note: The following outline is not prescriptive: a unit’s self-study may not include all the suggested and may include other information; self-studies may also be organized in the ways individuals will find most efficient and helpful.

I. Program Vision and Mission and Its Place within the Dominican University Mission.

II. Program History
   - History of the program at Dominican University
   - Summary review of past years’ (since last review) plans, goals, and the outcomes achieved

III. Description of Current Program

IV. Desired Student Outcomes
   - Identification of desired student outcome (knowledge, skills, attitudes)
   - Discussion of student outcomes as they relate to the program mission, reflecting research in the field; needs, changes and demands in real world applications; and field-based exams or other measures of competence.
   - Measures of these student outcomes
   - Analysis of data received from the measures

V. Examination of Program
   A. Quality of Program Curriculum: Guidelines/Indicators
      - Essential knowledge and skills for field of study are identified and given priority.
      - The course of study addresses this essential knowledge and these skills.
      - Diverse needs of students are addressed without compromising essential knowledge and skills.
      - Course of study is coordinated across courses through dialogue among all program faculty, program faculty have a shared vision of student learning.
      - Course of study is evaluated, updated and modified using multiple means for accomplishment of goals and attention to student needs.
      - Course objectives are signs to program mission and to identified desired student outcomes.
      - Student’s see relationship between what they are learning and program goals,

   B. Quality of Faculty: Guidelines/Indicators
      - Faculty members remain current in their fields.
      - Faculty members collaborate on and are able to articulate program mission and desired student outcomes.
      - Course design and instruction are aligned with mission, goals and desired student outcomes.
• Faculty members are aware of diverse learning needs and address those needs without sacrificing desired goals.
• Faculty members share with students responsibility for student learning.
• Faculty members review and update their courses regularly to reflect research, field-based changes and new information.
• Faculty members teach only courses for which they have the requisite background.
• Faculty members utilize student evaluations for course redesign.

C. Quality of Student Experience: Guidelines/Indicators

• Advising of students includes regular contact, accessibility to advisor, guidance in line with mission, and desired student outcomes.
• Student retention in the program is monitored and evaluated.
• Methods for student evaluation of the program and instruction are in place and data is used by faculty and administration for program review.
• Students have the opportunity for learning and application of learning outside the classroom.

VI. Institutional Support for the Program: Guidelines/Indicators

• Instructional resources such as textbooks, library materials, technology, laboratories, studios, and other equipment are adequate and appropriate for the course of study.
• Students have access to instructional materials and supplemental instructional materials.
• Physical environment for learning is appropriate and supports installations and desired student outcomes.

VII. Long-Term Goals for Program and Plans for Achieving Goals