# Enhancing Excellence in Teaching and Learning

# A proposal of curricular expectations and re-designed campus processes

Presented by Bruce Fox, Chair of Liberal Studies Committee; member of University Assessment Committee;

Rob Till, Chair of University Assessment Committee;

Craig Bain, Chair of University Curriculum Committee, and

Niranjan Venkatraman, member of University Graduate Committee, member of University Assessment Committee

Faculty members, as part of a Curriculum and Assessment work group[[1]](#footnote-1), convened in the summer of 2013 to discuss enhancing excellence in teaching and learning on campus. The work group recognized a compelling need for change due to the:

1. absence of faculty-driven uniform expectations of degree programs;
2. wide variability in the capacity of degree programs to:
   1. articulate how their courses facilitate their students’ learning and
   2. demonstrate that their students are learning; and
3. isolation of curriculum, assessment, and program review processes (See Figure 1, page 3).

We recommend that to enhance faculty stewardship of the outstanding education provided at NAU we must clearly articulate curriculum and assessment expectations for degree programs and re-structure campus curriculum and assessment processes to support these expectations.

Expectations for intentional curricular design of degree programs should drive the:

* development,
* approval, and
* focused review of curricula.

Broadly speaking, a faculty committee would collectively set the expectations for curricular design (not content) of degree programs. Faculty committees would apply those expectations in decision making regarding curriculum proposals, and faculty committees and academic leaders would utilize those expectations in providing feedback during periodic degree program reviews (Academic Program Review/ Accreditations).

#### Identifying Curricular Expectations that Sustain High Quality Academic Programs (Appendix A)

A successful, high-quality academic ***degree program*** requires degree program faculty members to demonstrate a shared vision of their curriculum goals and to ensure that their curricular structures assist students in achieving the stated learning outcomes of the degree program. Faculty would ensure implementation of the following (pg 5):

1. **Mission & Purpose of a Degree Program** (pg. 5)
   * Broadly describes how and for what purpose the degree program prepares students
2. **Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes** (pg 6)
   * Explicitly articulates what students will know and be able to do upon completion of the degree program
3. **Curriculum Design with a Curriculum Map** (pg 6)
   * Clearly describes why and how learning opportunities are structured in a particular manner, including:
     + Scope: Breadth and depth of the degree program;
     + Progression: Learning experiences progress logically, developing the learner to levels of expertise appropriate for the degree program;
     + Alignment: Course learning experiences, course student learning outcomes, and degree program student learning outcomes support the mission and purpose of the degree program; and
     + Integration: Clear relationships exist among the parts of a curriculum (e.g., courses, learning experiences).
   * Provides a visual representation of the progression, alignment, and integration of the degree program through a well-organized Curriculum Map
4. **Strategic Course Learning Design which supports Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes** (pg 7)
   * Course learning design demonstrates the principles of good curriculum design (scope, progression, alignment and integration)
5. **Systematic Assessment of Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes** (pg 7)
   * Faculty regularly assess students’ achievement of Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
6. **Use of Assessment Findings for Continual Improvement** (pg 8)
   * Faculty collectively use assessment findings to identify and celebrate program strengths as evidenced by student learning, and to inform curricular and learning design modifications to enhance student learning

#### Re-Structuring Campus Processes that Facilitate and Sustain Curricular Expectations (Appendix B)

The working group recommends re-designing the committee structures and reporting processes (see Figure 2, pg 4) to ensure consistency in the enhancement of excellent student learning at NAU. Recommended elements include incorporating findings from faculty reflections on classroom practices and student learning (Continuous Course Improvement Documents) into faculty Statements of Expectations (SOEs) (pg 12), peer feedback on curriculum proposals based on curricular expectations (pg 9), consistent focused reviews of curriculum and assessment as part of Academic Program Review/ Accreditation (with peer feedback provided to the degree program and leadership), and connected annual and periodic reporting (pg 10).

Key changes:

1. **Academic leaders in degree programs would collectively engage faculty to align degree programs with expectations.** Degree programs would ensure continued alignment of degree program with expectations through:

* Conducting a self-examination in the form of a Focused Review of Curriculum & Assessment as part of Academic Program Review/ Accreditation (pg 10);
* Developing an Action Plan based on findings from the Academic Program Review/ Accreditation that (pg 11)
  + sets strategic goals for the degree program (i.e., potential curricular changes based on assessment findings) and
  + identifies how the degree program will achieve the goals for student learning (i.e., creating a well-articulated strategy to assess student learning outcomes);
* Compiling an Annual Curriculum & Assessment Progress Report based on the Degree Program Action Plan (pg 11);
* Proposing curriculum that is consistent with expectations (pg 9);
* Connecting goals within faculty SOEs to degree program goals (pg 12); and
* Incorporating faculty reflections on classroom practices and student learning (Continuous Course Improvement Documents) into faculty SOEs (pg 12).

1. **A University Curriculum and Assessment Committee (UCAC) that sets and reviews the achievement of curricular expectations.** The UCAC would:

* Set University-wide expectations for curriculum and assessment;
* Provide a forum for campus-wide discussion of curriculum and assessment;
* Review degree programs based on expectations and provide feedback to program faculty and academic leadership, as part of Academic Program Review/ Accreditation (pg 10);
* Coordinate the Undergraduate, Graduate, and Liberal Studies Sub-Committees’ review and recommendation of curriculum actions based on expectations (pg 9);
* Coordinate the College Curriculum & Assessment Committees which (pg 9):
  + Review and provide feedback on Annual Curriculum & Assessment Progress Reports; and
  + Review, provide feedback based on expectations, and recommend curriculum to the appropriate UCAC Sub-Committee.

#### Faculty Senate Request (Appendix C)

By the end of the Fall 2013 semester, we request that the Faculty Senate (pg 13):

1. Approve the expectations and committee structures in this proposal,
2. Approve the formation of an Implementation Task Force to revise committee structures and align review processes with expectations for implementation in Fall 2014, and
3. Task academic leaders with adopting and providing support for these recommendations.

**Figure 1. Current State of Curriculum & Assessment at NAU**

**Academic Plan Accreditation**

- A Degree Program review with the majority having specific expectations for curriculum and assessment

- Review period set by External Accreditors

**Liberal Studies Committee**

Designates proposed courses as Liberal Studies for the catalog

Provides a forum for campus-wide discussion of L.S.

Other tasks as appropriate

**University Graduate Committee**

Passes courses and plans into the catalog (based on definitions of credit hours/ overlap)

Provides a forum for campus-wide discussion of graduate curriculum

Other tasks as appropriate

**Key to Arrows:**

Communication

Report/ Document Submission

Review & Feedback

Report/ Document Submission

for Review & Approval (No Feedback)

**Academic Program Review**

- A Department-level Review with no defined expectations for curriculum and assessment

- Review period set by Provost/ Vice Provost

**Provost, Vice Provost & Deans**

Oversees Academic Program Reviews & Academic Plan Accreditations

Develops Action Plans with Departments

**Faculty Members**

Statement of Expectations

**Degree Program (Chairs/ Leaders)**

Submission of curriculum proposals for catalog

Annual Assessment Report

Either an Academic Program Review

Or an Academic Plan Accreditation Report

Action Plan based on Review/ Accreditation

**College-level Curriculum Committees & Deans**

Passes courses and plans to the UCC/ UGC/ LSC

Some colleges give feedback based on definitions of credit hours and overlap

**University Assessment Committee**

Sets University-wide criteria and expectations for assessment

Reviews and provides feedback on Annual Assessment Reports

Provides a forum for campus-wide discussion of assessment

Other tasks as appropriate

**University Curriculum Committee**

Passes courses and plans into the catalog (based on definitions of credit hours/ overlap)

Provides a forum for campus-wide discussion of undergraduate curriculum

Other tasks as appropriate

**Faculty Senate**

**College Curriculum & Assessment Committees\* (CCAC) & Deans**

Reviews and provides feedback on Annual Curriculum & Assessment Progress Reports

Reviews, provides feedback, and recommends curriculum actions based on expectations, passing proposals to the appropriate Curriculum Sub-Committee

***Liberal Studies Curriculum Sub-Committee\****

Reviews, provides feedback, and recommends Liberal Studies curriculum actions to the Provost based on expectations

***Graduate Curriculum Sub-Committee\****

Reviews, provides feedback, and recommends Graduate curriculum actions to the Provost based on expectations

***Undergrad Curriculum Sub-Committee\****

Reviews, provides feedback, and recommends Undergraduate curriculum actions to the Provost based on expectations

**University Curriculum & Assessment Committee (UCAC)**

Sets University-wide expectations for curriculum and assessment

Provides a forum for campus-wide discussion of curriculum and assessment

Reviews and provides feedback on Focused Reviews of Curriculum & Assessment, as part of Academic Program Review/ Accreditations

Coordinates the implementation and use of expectations within the Undergraduate, Graduate, and Liberal Studies Curriculum Sub-Committees and College Curriculum & Assessment Committees\*

**Provost, Vice Provost & Deans**

Coordinates completion of Academic Program Reviews & Accreditations

Works with UCAC to conduct consistent Focused Reviews (Academic Program Reviews/ Accreditations) using expectations for curriculum and assessment set by the UCAC

Develops Action Plans with degree programs that incorporate UCAC feedback

**Figure 2. Proposed Model for Curriculum & Assessment**

**Faculty Member**

Contributes to collective degree program goals (Statements of Expectations)

Reflects upon class teaching and learning (Continuous Course Improvement Documents)

**Degree Programs (Academic Unit Leader, Chair, etc.)**

Engages faculty collectively in degree program goals

Aligns degree program(s) with expectations

Ensures continued alignment of degree program with expectations through:

* Conducting Focused Review of Curriculum & Assessment as part of Academic Program Review or Accreditations
* Creating an Action Plan based on Academic Program Review or Accreditation findings
* Compiling Annual Curriculum & Assessment Progress Reports based on Action Plan
* Proposing curriculum consistent with expectations

**Faculty Senate**

**Key to Arrows:**

Communication

Report/ Document Submission

Review & Feedback

Report/ Document Submission

for Review & Approval (No Feedback)

\* The formation of the UCAC Sub-Committees would not supersede other non-curricular responsibilities of these important committees (pg 9)

# Appendix A: Identifying Curricular Expectations that Sustain High Quality Academic Programs

The summer working group reviewed and evaluated practices in curriculum, learning design, and assessment that aligned with high-quality student learning. Aligning, documenting, and ensuring progression and integration of program-level and course-level design has the following six advantages, in that it will help:

1. Create a clear path for students as they move through their programs of study;
2. Academic programs better identify where in the curriculum students have the opportunity to meet program-level student learning outcomes;
3. Identify course progressions that help students learn;
4. Identify opportunities to streamline curriculum;
5. Identify potential gaps or unintended redundancies in curriculum; and
6. Identify resource needs, especially for faculty expertise.

Incorporating regular assessment into curricular processes with the aim of identifying where and how to improve degree programs engages faculty collectively in discussions and broader strategies to intentionally design curriculum to enhance student learning. As a collective force, faculty are improving student learning through their assessment efforts as they continuously review student learning outcomes to align with course, program and university educational goals, and using assessment findings to collaboratively design learning experiences that will bolster student learning while aligning with faculty teaching strengths.

#### Proposed Curricular Expectations

A successful, high-quality academic ***degree program*** requires a collective commitment with respect to curriculum and assessment on the part of the faculty serving the degree program. Thus, a foundational assumption for such success is that the faculty who support the degree program demonstrate a shared vision of curriculum goals and actively take responsibility for curriculum through implementing the following six curricular components for all NAU programs:

1. **Mission & Purpose of a Degree Program**: Faculty would articulate the degree program’s purpose(s) related to student learning. The degree program mission would describe:
   * How the degree program will contribute to student learning of majors
   * The activities for which students will be prepared (careers, graduate school, life-long learning, etc.) following completion of the degree program
   * How the degree program prepares students for future activities, or in some manner relates the learning in the degree program to a students’ potential future activities
   * The degree program’s characteristics, particularly anything that makes it unique (these areas are not prescribed, but are self-determined by the degree), such as:
     + Learning opportunities or experiences
     + Service provided to the community
     + Pedagogical values
     + Areas of specialization
     + Mentoring
     + Other characteristics self-determined by the degree
   * The degree program’s alignment to the mission and goals of the university, college, and department that support the degree program.
2. **Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes**: Faculty would articulate what students will know and be able to do upon completion of the degree program.
   * Each Degree Program Student Learning Outcome would:
     + Be learner-centered (focused on what students learn, rather than on what faculty teach);
     + Align with the degree program mission or purpose;
     + Focus on the central skills and knowledge of the discipline; and
     + Integrate content, skills and purpose (which makes student learning observable or “measurable”).
   * As a whole, the Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes would:
     + Have distinctive student learning outcomes for each emphasis, if the degree program has emphases with unique curricular requirements,
     + Integrate University-wide initiatives, where appropriate (Global Learning Initiative themes-global engagement, diversity, environmental sustainability, Liberal Studies, Diversity), and
     + Be appropriate to the level of the degree offered (Bachelor’s degree outcomes would be less rigorous and comprehensive than a Doctoral degree’s outcomes).
   * Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes would be widely available through the Student Learning Outcomes archives on the NAU University Learning Outcomes website.
3. **Curriculum Design & the Curriculum Map**: Faculty would clearly describe why and how learning opportunities are structured in a particular manner for their degree program. Important characteristics of curriculum design include:
   * Clearly Defined Scope: Breadth and depth of the program
     + All major areas of disciplinary content are represented, as determined by faculty
     + The prioritization of the degree program’s student learning outcomes are clearly manifested in the degree requirements and electives selected by the faculty
     + University-wide, college-level, and department learning priorities are integrated into the curriculum (University Student Learning Outcomes, Global Learning Initiative, Liberal Studies, etc.)
   * Progression: Learning experiences progress logically, developing the learner to levels of expertise appropriate for the degree program;
     + Content knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and other student learning outcomes of the degree program are introduced and practiced (reinforced) in a manner that allows students to progress from novice to greater levels of expertise
     + The content and sequence of prerequisites are logical and reasonable
     + Learning experiences become progressively more integrated and rigorous as students advance through the degree program
   * Alignment: Consistency and coherence of the degree program
     + The degree program student learning outcomes are aligned to the overarching mission and purpose of the degree program
     + Degree program student learning outcomes are clearly aligned with course student learning outcomes
     + Course student learning outcomes are directly connected to learning experiences and course assignments/ assessments
     + Connections between and among areas of the curriculum (Mission, Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes, Course Student Learning Outcomes, Learning Experiences and Assessments) are consistently and repeatedly made explicit to students
     + The alignment of multi-section courses to ensure student learning is consistent across sections is discussed and determined by the faculty members teaching the course
   * Integration: Clear relationships exist between content and skills throughout the progression of the degree’s required and elective courses
     + There is a clear relationship among the parts of a curriculum, and elements are not taught as disparate units
     + Rich interactions occur among content and skills with learning experiences that mirror real-world use of disciplinary content and skills
     + Students have enough opportunities to master outcomes (course and degree level) in an integrated fashion
     + Integration of knowledge from pre-requisites and/ or University-wide requirements (Liberal Studies, Diversity, Global Learning Initiative, etc.) occurs in a sufficiently pervasive manner that students build and understand relationships among various disciplinary fields
   * Curriculum Map: Clear visual representation of the progression, alignment, and integration of student learning throughout the degree program’s curriculum
     + Allows individuals within and outside of the department to understand the progression, alignment, and integration of the degree program’s student learning outcomes, as they are delivered from the beginning to the end of the degree program
     + Some form of the Curriculum Map is made widely available
     + Maps are practical, clear, well-organized, and user-friendly
4. **Course Learning Design:** Faculty would ensure their current classes, as well as new curricular proposals, adhere to the following criteria:
   * Course Student Learning Outcomes define the scope of the course
   * A clear explanation of how the learning opportunities (discussions, lectures, activities, assignments) will accomplish the student learning outcomes of the course is provided
   * A clear explanation of how the assessments (assignments, tests, papers, presentations, projects, etc.) are designed to assess the student learning outcomes of the course is provided
   * Assignment expectations are clear and transparent, and standards are set in a manner that students clearly understand what is expected of them to succeed
   * A description of how the knowledge and skills of the prerequisites will be used and built upon in this course (as applicable) is provided
   * A description is provided of how the knowledge and skills learned in this course will be used in future areas of the degree program or University or future experiences
   * A description is provided of what elements of the course are important for all students to experience, and what learning areas are left up to the design of the instructor
   * Instructors designing the course converse with colleagues within and outside of their degree program to ensure the course achieves the student learning outcomes needed across the university (particularly if the course is a common pre-requisite for other degree programs)
   * Frequent formative assessment is provided to students in a manner in which students can understand and apply the feedback to enhance their performance
   * A Continuous Course Improvement Document (See page 7) is completed for the course (A guided reflection of teaching and learning completed by an instructor upon completion of the course, which is used to document the learning successes and challenges of the course and assist the degree program in its continual improvement of student learning)
5. **Systematic Assessment of the Degree Program:** Faculty would ensure:
   * Students are assessed as to their level of achievement of Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
   * Data are collected from current students (quantitative or qualitative) concerning preparation of students for real-world endeavors and other issues of interest to the degree program
   * Faculty teaching elements of the degree program are engaged proactively in continuous, effective, and mutually agreed-upon assessment that is focused on student learning of Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
   * Stakeholders are involved in conversations regarding assessment findings, such as alumni and employer advisory boards
   * Data are collected from alumni (quantitative or qualitative) as to how the degree program supports their current and future activities
   * A range of data are continuously collected and analyzed to examine student learning in the degree program
   * Students are involved in the assessment process, such as analyzing and making sense of assessment data, providing input on ways to improve student learning, recommending program changes and improvements, etc.
   * Continuous Course Improvement Documents are gathered and reviewed, and trends are identified in course changes within and across courses
6. **Use of Assessment Findings:** Faculty would ensure assessment findings are used in the following ways:
   * To regularly improve the degree program based on systematic data analysis of assessment findings and Continuous Course Improvement Documents (see below)
   * To identify resource and support needs to continually enhance faculty expertise in the areas of curriculum and assessment (e.g., consultation for curriculum and learning design, consultation or support of assessment endeavors, eLearning support, and Faculty Development opportunities, etc.)
   * To celebrate and promote the learning occurring within the degree program

These expectations for intentional curricular design of degree programs would drive the development, approval, and focused review of curricula. Following the University Assessment Committee model of providing feedback based upon current best practices, degree programs would receive feedback from their peers as part of the curricular submission process and the periodic and annual reporting requirements (see Appendix B).

## Appendix B: Re-Structures Campus Processes that Facilitate and Sustain

## Curricular Expectations

#### Changes to the Process of Curricular Proposal Submissions (Figure 3)

Review of curriculum proposals would be coordinated by the University Curriculum & Assessment Committee (UCAC) to ensure College Curriculum & Assessment Committees (CCAC) and Undergraduate, Graduate, and Liberal Studies Curriculum Sub-Committees are providing consistent feedback to programs based on the expectations for curriculum set by the UCAC.

1. Degree program chairs/ leaders and faculty members would develop curriculum proposals that align with the expectations of curriculum, and would likely include the following (development of templates and criterion would be part of the implementation plan):
   1. FAST TRACK items would remain FAST TRACK items
   2. New programs would need to go through ABOR for approval, just as they do now
   3. Proposals for substantial changes to courses and/or degree programs would need to be based on the expectations for curriculum and assessment. Following are a list of potential items that were discussed by the Summer Work Group and will be raised as criterion to the Implementation Task Force (if concept is approved) that may or may not be incorporated into the process:
      1. Rationale for how the course contributes to such areas as the degree, Liberal Studies, Diversity, etc.
      2. Evidence from assessments for the changes to the course or program
      3. Description of how the course achieves elements of curriculum design (scope, progression, integration, alignment, etc.)
      4. Course learning design standards (pg 7)
      5. Relation of changes to actions set forth by the degree program through the Academic Program Review/ Accreditation or Action Planning Processes (pg 10)
2. College Curriculum & Assessment Committees and Deans would review curriculum proposals based on the criterion established by the Implementation Task Force (if concept is approved), and will either provide feedback to the program for any improvements to the proposal, or will send it to the appropriate University Curriculum & Assessment Sub-Committee
3. The University Curriculum & Assessment Sub-Committees would review curriculum proposals based on the criterion established by the Implementation Task Force (if the concepts is approved), and would either provide feedback to the program for any improvements to the proposal, or will recommend it for approval to the Provost
4. The formation of the UCAC Sub-Committees would not supersede other non-curricular responsibilities of the Undergraduate, Graduate and Liberal Studies or College Committees. The coordination of the UCAC, its Sub-Committees, and the CCACs would be determined through focused conversations with these groups as part of an Implementation Task Force (if this concept is approved).

**Figure 3. Proposed Flow of Curriculum Submissions**

**Provost**

**Degree Program Chair/Leader & Faculty**

**University Curriculum & Assessment Committee (UCAC)**

**College Curriculum & Assessment Committees,**

**Deans**

**Undergraduate**

**Curriculum**

**Sub-Committee**

**Graduate**

**Curriculum**

**Sub-Committee**

**Liberal Studies**

**Curriculum**

**Sub-Committee**

#### Changes to the Process of Periodic & Annual Reporting

The periodic review of degree program curriculum and assessment would be conducted as part of Academic Program Review or Accreditation Processes (most Accreditation processes already incorporate these elements)

Process of Periodic and Annual Reporting:

1. The degree program’s chair/ leader and faculty members would incorporate into their Self-Study a report of each of their degree program’s:
   * Mission and Purpose
   * Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
   * Curriculum Design and a Curriculum Map
   * Course Learning Design (syllabi)
   * Results, analyses and interpretation of the “Systematic Assessment of Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes” conducted since the last review
   * Use of Assessment Findings
2. Peer review of the Curriculum & Assessment portion of the Academic Program Reviews/ Accreditations would occur by UCAC members using established criterion
   * For programs with external accreditation, these criterion would mostly align with external accreditors’ criterion but would also incorporate curriculum and assessment elements important to NAU that may not necessarily be part of the Accreditors review of the program (incorporating the Global Learning Initiative, etc.).
3. Feedback from the UCAC would be utilized by the degree program chair/ leader, faculty members, the Provost, Vice Provost and Dean in developing an Action Plan of goals for the degree program in preparation for its next periodic review
4. The degree program chair/ leader and faculty members would use the Action Plan to guide their curriculum and assessment activities for the coming year, including the review and completion of Continuous Course Improvement Documents and the development of faculty teaching, research and service activities in their SOEs that align with the achievement of degree program goals (pg 12).
5. The Action Plan becomes the basis for annual reporting to the CCAC & Deans. Degree program chairs/ leaders and faculty members attach their Action Plan to the report and document what they have achieved over the previous year, and what their plans for curriculum and assessment in the coming year.

**Degree Program**

**Chair/Leader & Faculty,**

**Provost & Vice Provost,**

**Dean**

**Degree Program**

**Chair/Leader & Faculty**

**University Curriculum & Assessment Committee (UCAC)**

**Figure 4. Proposed Flow of Periodic & Annual Reporting**

**Degree Program**

**(Chair/ Leader)**

**University Curriculum & Assessment Committee (UCAC)**

**College Curriculum & Assessment Committees,**

**Deans**

***Focused Review of Curriculum & Assessment as part of***

***Academic Program Review/ Accreditations***

***Annual Progress Report on Curriculum & Assessment***

**Action Plan**

#### An Overview of Changes to Periodic and Annual Assessment Reporting Requirements

#### Academic Program Review/ Accreditation

The Academic Program Review/ Accreditation cycle would be used to provide a focused, yet periodic, review of curriculum and assessment. It would:

* Provide a structure for periodically reviewing curriculum and assessment
  + Use the curricular expectations identified above and set by the faculty through a faculty-led governing process
  + Review the following curricular components:
    - Mission and Purpose of the Degree Program
    - Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
    - Curriculum Design and a Curriculum Map
    - Course Learning Design
    - Systematic Assessment of Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
    - Use of Assessment Findings
* Provide consistent feedback to the degree program and leadership concerning student learning, curriculum and assessment that would be incorporated into an Action Plan by the degree program chair/ leader, faculty members, Provost, Vice Provost and Deans

#### Action Plan (as part of Academic Program Reviews/ Accreditations)

Following the Academic Program Review or Accreditation (which would include a periodic review of degree program curriculum and assessment), an Action Plan is developed among the degree program chair or leader, faculty, Provost, Vice Provost, and Deans to guide the Degree Program in the accomplishment of specific goals for the next Academic Program Review or Accreditation. The Action Plan:

* Provides a structure for incorporating recommendations from the review (including feedback from the review of the degree program’s curriculum and assessment) into concrete actions that can be planned and carried out by the degree program chair/ leader and faculty members prior to the next Academic Program Review or Accreditation
* In terms of preparation for the next Review, it would include such things as:
  + An Assessment Plan for systematic assessment of Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
  + A timeline for examining assessment findings, as appropriate to the goals of the degree program
  + A timeline for designing and/or implementing curriculum changes, as identified through the Review Process

#### Annual Progress Reports on Curriculum & Assessment (replaces the Annual Assessment Report)

The Action Plan becomes the basis for annual reporting to the College Curriculum & Assessment Committees & Deans. Degree program chairs/ leaders and faculty members attach their Action Plan to the report and document what they have achieved over the previous year, and what their plans for curriculum and assessment in the coming year. It would:

* Provide a structure for compiling such information as provided in the following examples (though actions would be determined by the unique goals of the degree program’s Action Plan):
  + implementation of an assessment plan that systematically collects data on the level students are achieving Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes prior to the next Academic Program Review/ Accreditation
  + curricular and learning design changes
  + trends in Continuous Course Improvement Documents (CCIDs) and their relation to larger program and curricular goals
  + the use of feedback (assessment and CCIDs) for the continual improvement of curriculum and learning design
  + actions faculty members have taken toward improvement of program, course, and student learning in some manner (through a faculty member’s research, service, teaching)
* Provide consistent feedback to the degree program and leadership concerning student learning, curriculum and assessment endeavors achieved toward the Action Plan during the previous year

#### Continuous Course Improvement Documents (CCIDs) and the Faculty SOE

The coordination and use of the Continuous Course Improvement Document and the faculty SOE would be determined through focused conversations as part of an Implementation Task Force (if this concept is approved)

* Overall, the Summer Work Group was interested in identifying methods for:

1. Connecting what faculty do individually to the longer-term goals of the degree program, as identified in its Action Plan
2. Creating regular reflections of learning challenges and successes within courses and across the degree program that would engage faculty in sustained discussions of student learning and its relation to course learning design and degree program curriculum design
3. Faculty to incorporate activities related to the Action Plan into the teaching, research and service elements of the SOE to ensure activities related to sustaining the highest quality student learning in our degree programs remains a high priority within the competing demands for faculty time

***The Continuous Course Improvement Document (CCID)***

The Continuous Course Improvement Document is a guided reflection of teaching and learning completed by an instructor upon completion of the course, which is used to document the learning successes and challenges of the course and assist the degree program in its continual improvement of student learning. A variety of degree programs already use these documents for course and program-level improvement with great success as part of the Accreditation Programs. The Summer Work Group incorporated them into this proposal due to their ability to

1. Provide a legacy of documentation wherein faculty can learn from each other about the innovations and changes they make in their courses and across their degree programs
2. Decreasing isolation of beneficial course changes by using course changes and observations to build broader innovations and improvements for learning design across degree programs. This is accomplished through the review of these documents on an annual and/or periodic basis, depending on the Action Plan goals of the degree program.
3. Supporting faculty in the implementation of great ideas for course change through documenting what the faculty member would like to change, and connecting that to the next year’s SOE for teaching, research, and service.

* Sample questions colleges might consider:
  1. What student learning outcomes were best achieved, and why?
  2. For those outcomes that were not achieved for a significant number of students, what do you perceive were the problems?
  3. Was the course successful for certain students and not for others? If so, what were the differences between the groups?
  4. Which specific elements of your course were more or less successful than you had hoped? If there were specific successes or challenges, what were they?
  5. If important changes are required, what specific areas are most important and should be given priority in the revision process? Where would you start?

## Appendix C: Proposed Timeline for Proposal Review &

## Potential Implementation

* Fall 2013
  + Feedback from the following committees:
    - Provost’s Academic Leadership Council (PALC)
    - Advisory Council on Curriculum &Assessment (ACCA)
    - Faculty Senate Executive Committee
    - Faculty Senate
    - University Assessment Committee (UAC)
    - University Curriculum Committee (UCC)
    - University Graduate Committee (UGC)
    - Liberal Studies Committee (LSC)
    - Academic Chair’s Council Executive Council
    - Academic Chair’s Council (ACC)
    - Extended Campuses Curriculum Committee (ECCC)
  + Incorporation of feedback received from committees
  + To Faculty Senate for:
    - Approval of the expectations and committee structures in this proposal,
    - Approval of the formation of an Implementation Task Force to revise committee structures and align review processes with expectations for implementation in Fall 2014, and
    - Tasking academic leaders with adopting and providing support for these recommendations.
* Spring 2014
  + Create an Implementation Task Force?
  + Develop Implementation Plan?
    - Changes to Committees (By-Laws, Charge, etc.)?
    - Changes to Reporting Requirements, etc.?
  + Begin support for faculty to implement changes
* Fall 2014
  + Implement Committee Changes?
  + Continue support for faculty to implement changes?
  + Pilot new processes and “work the kinks out?”

1. University Assessment Committee: Yuly Ascension, Julia Ragonese-Barwell, Kathee Rose. University Curriculum Committee: Chuck Hammersley, James Palmer, Peggy Pollack, Jennifer Prior. Liberal Studies Committee: Bruce Fox, Ro Haddon. At large: Charles Balch, K. Laurie Dickson, Suzanne Pieper, Melinda Treml [↑](#footnote-ref-1)