Contact: Diana Gonzalez

REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCEDURE CHANGES
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Action Requested: Receive the report on academic program review procedure changes resulting from the academic program review audit at Iowa State University.

Executive Summary: This report includes Iowa State University's follow-up report on the comments, suggestions, and recommendations that resulted from the audit of academic program review and student outcomes assessment procedures conducted by the Board Office in 2004. Some of the changes implemented by ISU following the audit include:

1. Development of a more systematic and consistent approach to initiate academic program reviews including implementation of a new procedure and standard timeline to review the academic program review process on a timely basis with appropriate staff.

2. Implementation of consistent processes for initial response to academic program reviews including exit meetings between the provost's staff and the external team.

3. Re-emphasis of the outcomes-based, evaluative, forward-looking foci of academic program review including planning for program improvements.

4. Refinement of student outcomes assessment processes including college websites describing and documenting student outcomes assessment processes and results.

5. Systematic inclusion of interdisciplinary programs (graduate and undergraduate majors and minors) in the academic program review multi-year schedule.

6. Initiation of systematic central administrative follow-up between academic program reviews including a mid-cycle report by deans on follow-up actions taken by programs reviewed.

7. Creation of a new support staff position, Continuous Academic Program Improvement Coordinator, in the Office of the Provost responsible for coordinating academic program reviews, student outcomes assessment, accreditation reviews, and other continuous improvement processes pertaining to academic programs.

8. Updated materials on the ISU Assessment of Academic Programs website.

Iowa State University responded to the individual recommendations and the suggestions contained in the September 2004 audit report. Of particular note is ISU's commitment to the academic program review and student outcomes assessment process as evidenced by (1) the creation of a position in the provost's office to coordinate and monitor all aspects of the academic program review process and (2) continued evaluation of the process with the next cycle planned for 2006. Iowa State University is encouraged to continue to monitor and improve the academic program review and student outcomes assessment process with the ultimate goal of program improvement.

A copy of the September 2004 audit report is available on the Board of Regents website.

◇ <u>**Details of ISU's follow-up report**</u>.

ISU's academic program review and student outcomes assessment processes focus on assessing and improving academic programs systematically and continuously. Therefore, ISU emphasizes undergraduate teaching and learning; it also includes assessment and continuous improvement processes associated with graduate education, discovery, engagement, and other program responsibilities consistent with applicable strategic plan elements. ISU's objective is to develop more effective continuous academic improvement processes that enable achievement of the institution's strategic plan as it applies to specific academic programs and units. The changes presented in the report resulted from specific audit report recommendations as well as from a broad re-examination of processes referenced in the report.

1. Development of a more systematic and consistent approach to initiate academic program reviews.

☑ Implemented a new procedure for the associate provost for academic programs to meet with the dean and (typically) associate dean of each academic college during the first half of spring semester each year to review the academic program review process, to confirm that the program reviews scheduled for the next academic year are being initiated, and to discuss expectations and schedule for the various elements of the review process.

☑ Clarified that a required element early in the review initiation process is the approval of team members by the college dean and the associate provost for academic programs.

☑ Developed a standard timeline for the activities associated with program review, which is discussed with the college leadership, and is distributed for use by colleges and programs as they prepare for program reviews.

☑ Affirmed that accreditation review (for accredited programs) is not a substitute for academic program review, but recognized that, in some instances, it may be appropriate for a specific program review to have emphases that leverage results of accreditation reviews.

☑ Continued emphasis on the importance of review team members being selected from peer or better programs so that recommendations reflect potential program improvement relative to peer institutions.

☑ Renewed emphasis on the importance of the evaluative, as well as descriptive, elements of the self-study.

☑ Encouraged broader faculty involvement in the self-study development, student outcomes assessment, and program review processes.

☑ Provost Office senior staff members receive and review self-studies prior to external team visit.

☑ Additional evaluation of program review processes is planned for 2006.

2. Implementation of consistent processes for initial response to academic program reviews.

☑ Exit meetings with the external team include the provost, vice provosts, associate provosts, assistant provost, and chief information officer.

☑ Provost Office senior staff members meet and discuss their analyses of the exit meeting with the external team.

☑ Initial follow-up meeting with provost, associate provost for academic programs, program chair, dean, and associate dean no later than two weeks after the external team visit to discuss the team's preliminary recommendations.

☑ Review of program response to external team's final report by dean, associate dean, and associate provost for academic programs, resulting in revisions as appropriate.

3. Re-emphasis of the outcomes-based, evaluative, forward-looking foci of academic program review.

☑ Documentation provided to deans, associate deans, and program chairs emphasizes importance of outcomes-based (including student outcomes assessment) and evaluative elements of the self-study and program review.

☑ Ongoing emphasis is placed on planning for program improvements consistent with institutional strategic plans.

☑ Program review planning discussions with deans, associate deans, and program chairs reinforce the emphases contained in the revised documentation.

4. Refinement of student outcomes assessment processes.

☑ The associate/assistant deans are collaborating to refine and systematize student outcomes assessment processes.

☑ Colleges have refined websites describing and documenting student outcomes assessment processes and results.

☑ Student outcomes assessment has been used extensively to evaluate, document, and improve the effectiveness of academic initiatives, such as learning communities, and ISUComm.

5. Systematic inclusion of interdisciplinary programs in the academic program review multi-year schedule.

☑ Interdisciplinary academic programs have been systematically included in the multi-year schedule of academic program reviews.

☑ The Program for Women in Science and Engineering and the Women's Center were reviewed in Spring 2005; the Study Abroad program and University Lectures program are scheduled to be reviewed in Spring 2006.

☑ Interdisciplinary graduate and undergraduate majors and minors are part of the multi-year program review schedule.

☑ Similar review processes are being developed and implemented for centers and institutes.

6.   Initiation of systematic central administrative follow-up between academic program reviews.

    ☑   Beginning in Spring 2006, the annual follow-up by deans with academic programs (as part of annual reviews) will be augmented by a mid-cycle report on follow-up actions taken by programs reviewed in FY 2002 and FY 2003.

    ☑   Programs are encouraged to document progress continuously and systematically when responding to recommendations resulting from academic program reviews.

7.   Creation of a new support staff position, Continuous Academic Program Improvement Coordinator, in the Office of the Provost.

    ☑   The coordinator position was created in consultation with stakeholders during Spring 2005 and filled in September 2005.

    ☑   The coordinator is responsible for coordinating academic program review, student outcomes assessment, accreditation reviews, and other continuous improvement processes pertaining to academic programs.

8.   Updated materials on the ISU Assessment of Academic Programs website.

    ☑   Revised website content to reflect changes noted above, as well as other process changes and date sensitive material changes. Detailed information on the current Assessment of Academic Programs at Iowa State University is available on the provost's website at http://www.academicprograms/iastate.edu/assessment.