



*The discipline of learning. The art of caring.*

## **Western University of Health Sciences Academic Program Review: Standards**

**Overview:** The WesternU Standards for Academic Program Review provide guidelines for academic programs to reflect on and improve their quality and effectiveness. On the whole, the eight standards reflect WesternU's commitment to providing a superior educational experience.

### **Standard 1. Mission, History and Goals of the Program**

1.1 – The program's purpose is consistent with the mission and vision of the University and appropriate to their field.

*Guideline:* Discuss the purpose of the program. Provide a brief history of the program (date of establishment, number of graduates to date, significant milestones achieved, etc.). Include a statement of the connection of the degree program mission to Western University's Mission statement and its consistency with expectations in the field.

1.2 – The program defines mission fulfillment and plans are in place to achieve and measure related outcomes.

Related Documentation: Program's Catalog

### **Standard 2. Student Learning Outcomes**

2.1 – The program has a set of program learning outcomes that align with the University's eight institutional outcomes domains. There is evidence, both direct and indirect, that demonstrates achievement of learning within WesternU's institutional learning outcome domains.

*Guideline:* Specify the program's major student learning outcomes (i.e., what are the students expected to learn or be able to demonstrate upon their successful completion of the program). List sources of evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, and direct and indirect. If applicable, actual evidence (faculty review of theses or special projects required by the program using a common assessment rubric for the last few

years' graduates, employment rates, employer evaluations, etc.) shall be provided as an appendix to the report.

2.2. – Student learning outcomes are regularly reviewed to evaluate the degree to which program learning goals are being met. Assessment results are systematically shared within the program and used to guide curricular decisions.

*Guideline:* As part of the review process, the unit should select at least two outcomes to examine in a rigorous fashion, develop an appropriate assessment measure for each outcome, conduct that assessment, and evaluate the result in terms of any modifications to the curriculum they suggest. While indirect measures may be used to assess each outcome, for each outcome at least one direct measure of student achievement must be used (i.e., direct measures are those which are derived from actual student performance of the expected outcome in contrast to surveys that ask student opinions or employer satisfaction with the graduate). Describe how the program/unit uses student outcomes information in program planning

Related Documentation: Curriculum matrix, Sample Syllabi, Annual Assessment Reports

### **Standard 3. Assess the Curriculum**

3.1 – Curriculum content is well organized, appropriate, and includes generally accepted experiences for the degree.

3.2 – The curriculum provides content that is designed to help students achieve the stated outcomes (all stated outcomes) at the program and institutional levels.

3.3 – The program publishes student learning outcomes, at the course, program, and institutional level on all course syllabi.

*Guideline:* Discuss how the curriculum has been defined to meet the goals of the program and the University. This may include a description of the organization of the curriculum, the core courses, prerequisites, teaching methodologies, "capstone" projects, and other key features. A matrix that identifies what courses provide content and exercises that are designed should be provided. Identify any "gaps" (i.e., outcomes for which there is no or insufficient coursework to provide students with the knowledge and skills to meet that outcome). Any actual evidence to support the conclusion that the curriculum satisfactorily meets the goals of the program should be provided in the body of the self-study or an appendix. Identify the extent to which program outcomes are explicitly cited in each course syllabus.

Related Documentation: Curriculum Matrix, Sample Syllabi

#### **Standard 4. Assess the Faculty**

4.1 – The program employs an adequate number of qualified faculty to achieve its educational objectives.

4.2 – Faculty responsibilities, workload, and training opportunities align with the University's expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, and research.

*Guideline:* Consider the faculty resources as a whole in light of program goals, assess the adequacy of current faculty in terms of number, distribution by academic rank, specializations, qualifications, full-time versus part-time, faculty demographics. Assess faculty research/scholarly activity levels. Describe faculty development activities (i.e., how faculty keep current in their field, programs designed to improve faculty performance). Provide information on the size, type and source of any external grants obtained by the faculty. Assess the adequacy of faculty support services (software, library holdings, etc.) to meet faculty needs.

Related Documentation: BOT Report (November/December, May)

#### **Standard 5. Assess the Student Body**

5.1 – The program periodically reviews admissions data, disaggregated by demographic categories, including data on applicant pools, interviews, trends in enrollment, and yield rate. Data is used to inform recruitment and curricular modifications.

5.2 – Outcome metrics such as persistence/attrition rates, graduation rates, board/licensure rates, placement rates/type are evaluated to assess program effectiveness and to inform program improvement efforts.

5.3 – Student academic support services (library holdings, tutoring, access to IT, etc.) ensure quality and facilitate the attainment of the program and University educational objectives.

*Guideline:* Examine application, matriculation and program completion data, assess the strength of the program's applicant pool, trends in enrollment, demographic information on both applicants and matriculants, persistence rates, graduation rates, analysis of reasons for attrition, and employment rates and types of employment obtained. Describe how the faculty uses this information in planning the program curriculum. Assess the adequacy of student support services available to your students (library holdings, tutoring, access to IT, etc.).

Related Documentation: BOT Report (August, March)

## **Standard 6. Assess the Physical Facilities**

*Guideline:* Describe the availability of and access to physical resources necessary to support the program.

6.1 – Availability and access to physical resources necessary to support the program (classroom space, research space, faculty and administrative offices, computers, instructional and information technologies, etc.) in carrying out its goals are in place.

## **Standard 7. Assess the Staff**

7.1 – The program employs an adequate number of qualified staff to achieve its educational objectives.

*Guideline:* Describe the size, demographic profile, experience, and skill distribution of the administrative support staff and assess their suitability to carry out the goals of the program.

## **Standard 8. Assess the External Environment of the Program**

8.1 – The program regularly reviews external developments outside that may impact their academic unit.

*Guideline:* Describe developments outside the academic unit (both developments in other academic units of the University and outside the institution) that impact your program/unit. Assess these developments as either threats or opportunities for your unit. Outside factors could include changes in the workforce demands for your graduates, alumni relations, political changes, technologic changes, etc. Describe how alumni and other external stakeholder's are involved in program assessment and curricular planning.