Information Technology & Administrative Management
Academic Program Review Process
CEPS Dean's Review
June 27, 2011

The Academic Program Review Process.

The Academic Program Review is one of the most viable and cogent activities, in which the faculty of a department engages to assess its programs. The assessment includes curricula, instruction, advising, scholarship, and service. As stated in the preamble to the APR guidelines document, the program review process "… provides basic information on the nature of the department's programs and gives the faculty's assessment of the program's strengths and weaknesses. A program of self-study is the faculty's opportunity to scrutinize itself, to publicize its accomplishments and examine its shortcomings." Within the context of the Central Washington University Plan, the Academic Program Review process is an opportunity for the faculty and staff in the department, as well as the college dean and the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies, to determine the degree to which a department meets the mission, vision, core values, and strategic goals of the university. Moreover, the Academic Program Review provides a formal process by which the department's faculty and staff can examine their academic activities in the contest of their own mission and strategic goals.

External Visit
The on-campus external review occurred on March 1-3, 2011. Dr. John Chenoweth, associate professor of Information Technology and Business Education at the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater, reviewed programs in the Information Technology & Administrative Management department.

Strengths of the Information Technology and Administrative Management (ITAM) Department

The mission of the ITAM department is to *prepare students for productive and challenging careers in information technology and administrative management and for a lifetime of creative thinking and adaptive learning as productive professionals.* Dr. Chenoweth reviewed two majors (BS-ITAM and BAS- ITAM), the four BS-ITAM specializations and the two BAS-ITAM specializations. He noted the following strengths:

Advisory Board. The advisory board was established in 2008 and provides leadership, direction and support for the ITAM department. It is composed of twelve professionals from a variety of professional areas, several of whom are ITAM alums. In collaboration with members of the advisory board, ITAM faculty have streamlined program offerings with a focus on meeting student and industry needs. The result is an effective and efficient department that meets student needs and remains current by industry standards.

Faculty. The ITAM department has nine tenured/tenure track faculty members and, due to substantive growth in the past three years, hires eight to ten one and two year contracted non-tenure-track faculty members. The faculty have a high level of expertise, credentials and experience in his/her fields. There is a good mix of senior (four) and junior (five) tenure/tenure-track faculty members with senior faculty actively mentoring junior faculty in the department. In addition to instructional responsibilities, faculty engage in scholarly

activities and serve in a variety of leadership roles on campus, in the community and state, and in professional organizations.

Students. The ITAM programs have grown exponentially in the past few years with substantial growth. For example, the BAS ITAM has grown from 16 majors in 2008 to 59 in 2009 and 118 in 2010. Similarly, the BS ITAM has grown from 77 majors in 2008 to 135 in 2009 and 148 in 2010. In total, ITAM serves approximately 450 students.

According to Dr. Chenoweth, the students indicated that the content they get is good, but they "just want more of it." He further stated that the IT students feel they need more IT, and less "AM." Student perceptions of the department, programs, and faculty are very positive and they appreciate the advising support they receive.

In a survey of sixty alums, department faculty received feedback on strengths and recommendations for immediate improvement as well as future directions. For example, alums identified program strengths as being application oriented, including a practical internship, having classroom/career connections, and faculty/staff providing customer service. Recommendations for improvement include building and increasing flexibility in course delivery, ensuring course offerings are kept up-to-date with technology advancement, and stressing critical thinking skills, specifically problems solving skills. Recommendations for the future include preparing students for relevant industry certifications, offering international internship opportunities, and maintaining current technology applications.

Internship. Students are required to complete internship experiences with approved businesses or agencies. This experience provides students with opportunities to apply classroom knowledge and skills in a professional setting. Through this experience, students gain first-hand experience while earning academic credit.

Facilities. The ITAM Department is housed in Shaw-Smyser. Computer labs and classrooms have multi-media capability that support course content. Facilities and technology facilitates interactive and quality instruction and high quality teaching practices. Currently, student technology fees are used to update hardware and software required for course delivery.

Reported Challenges and Recommendations for the Information Technology and Administrative Management (ITAM) Department

Mission

1. Display the department mission more prominently - in the building, on the website, and in marketing materials. If was difficult to determine which statement was the mission in the review document and on the department website.

Funding

1. Continue advocating for an entrepreneurial funding model that rewards programs with innovative and significant growth.

2. Also, advocate for revenue generation aligned with online programming.

Programs and Curricula.

1. Dr. Chenoweth recommended reviewing curricula for overlap of information from course to course. But, he cautioned moving too heavily one way or the other and crossing

discipline lines with computer science or graphic design. He also recommends revising program assessments to ensure assessment data is informing the program.

2. Students are being prepared to be professionals in an ever-changing field. Funding, in addition to student fees, is needed to ensure software and hardware are kept current in order to ensure students are prepared to enter the field with the most contemporary skills.

Faculty and Staff.

1. Immediate need for faculty to meet program demand. As Dr. Chenoweth stated, there is a need to "capitalize on the energy now" and keep program offerings at the level to meet the student demand. Having to cap any of the programs due to lack of faculty will only cause students to go elsewhere and slow the current growth.

2. Immediate need for staff to meet program demand. There is one 11-month cyclic office support person and one part-time staff person, paid with ITAM summer funds. With programs located in eastern and western Washington, at least one additional fulltime staff person is needed to keep up with program growth.

Students.

1. Review program curricula to eliminate unnecessary content overlap, where appropriate.

2. Review data gathered from course assessments to ensure useful information is garnered.

3. Implement capstone courses that integrate knowledge and skills gained throughout the programs.

4. Advocate for more on-line general education course to support the BAS-ITAM.

Facilities. The Ellensburg ITAM department is located in Shaw-Smyser, which includes classrooms and faculty office space. Facilities are also located at CWU-Centers in Lynnwood/Edmonds and Des Moines. Student fees and self-support funds are used to supplement and update department equipment and technology. With the rapid program growth and faculty hired to keep up with student demand, the facilities are quickly becoming inadequate. Space for faculty offices on the Ellensburg campus is becoming difficulty to locate in Shaw-Smyser and the number of computer stations in laboratory classrooms limits the number of students who can enroll in the IT courses.

1. Ensure there is a stable funding stream to support maintaining facilities and technology.

2. Ensure facilities are adequate to keep up with faculty and student growth.

3. **Recommendation:** Relocate the ITAM Department. Shaw-Smyser, shared with the College of Business, is restricting program growth due to limited facilities and creates confusion among students and outside visitors who assume ITAM is part of the College of Business and not the College of Education and Professional Studies.

Moving Forward.

The ITAM Department is one of exemplary quality, strengths, and promise. Faculty are committed to the students, their fields of expertise, and to the university. The department has an excellent reputation both on campus and externally. The challenges and recommendations are, therefore, to be used to enhance the department and guide faculty in developing higher quality programs, scholarship, work-place environment, and support.

I look forward to working and collaborating with faculty, staff, students, and department chair to meet the challenges and to enhance an excellent department.