

Guidelines for Department and Program Reviews **Updated January 2023**

Beloit College engages in the review of academic departments and programs as a way of assessing the effectiveness of its curricula and of ensuring that its academic programming meets the needs of both current and prospective students. Reviews also help confirm that the college's programs align with its mission, goals, and values, its strategic priorities, and its aspiration to become an anti-racist institution as reflected in the Becoming Better initiative.

Overview:

Reviews of departments and programs at Beloit College are ordinarily conducted in response to one of the following situations:

- Departments and programs with significant staffing needs due to retirements or other departures or to increased student demand and market changes.
- Departments and programs in which a substantial change of focus or structure is anticipated or being explored, including possible synergies with other departments and programs.
- Departments and programs that have under-enrollment or irregular enrollment patterns.
- Departments and programs that have not engaged in a curricular review process in the last 10 years.

The format and scope of reviews vary in accordance with the immediate and/or projected context of the individual programs being reviewed, their needs and goals, and the larger interests of the college. The Provost, in consultation with the Academic Strategic Planning Committee and the Curriculum Oversight and Administration Committee, is responsible for identifying departments and programs and outlining broad goals for review. The college's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), at the instruction of the Provost, administers the review process and works with departments/programs to refine the review's goals and to lay out procedures. Each review will be completed in one year.

One or more consultants will be invited to participate in the external review process to contribute to discussions at the idea-generation stage and/or respond to the department/programs proposed plans. These visits will also provide an outside perspective with respect to the field or discipline. Visits will normally occur virtually.

The outcome of the review may include a proposal for a revised curriculum, a proposal for collaborative partnerships or mergers with other programs, a proposal for new staffing, and/or a plan for program marketing and recruitment and retention of students.

Administration of reviews:

1. Each spring, the Provost, in consultation with the Academic Strategic Planning

Committee and the Curriculum Oversight and Administration Committee, will identify departments and programs that are to undergo review in the following year and outline broad goals for these reviews. In instances where collaboration would be advantageous, departments and programs with overlapping curricular coverage and/or areas of thematic intersection may be asked to work together as part of a "review summit" rather than independently as a department/program in order to coordinate programming and staffing.

2. Departments and programs may also initiate the review process by submitting a request to the Provost.
3. The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) will administer the review process and work with departments/programs to refine the review's goals and to lay out procedures. The ALO will interface as necessary with the Provost's Office, ASP, and COA to facilitate the use of these reviews in the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation process.
4. Each review will be completed in one year.
5. The product of the review (proposal, planning document, etc.) will be submitted to the Provost, ASP, and COA. They, in turn, will respond as needed in order to advance the goals of the review.
6. The ALO will implement and maintain the review calendar once it is constructed by the Provost, ASP, and COA.
7. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning will provide assistance with data collection and analysis as needed.

Guidelines for departments/programs:

1. Departments and programs undergoing review--regardless of the reason--will prepare a document that addresses, as appropriate, the following questions:
 - What are the department's or program's questions?
 - What has the department learned from its inquiry/reflection?
 - What action items does the department propose?
 - What resources are needed?

The document may also include, as necessary or appropriate, the following:

- an articulation or revision of department/program mission and learning goals;
- an articulation of the ways in which the department/program addresses the college's Integrated Learning Outcomes;
- a statement about the ways in which the department/program contributes to the college's strategic initiatives described annually in the statement of Strategic Academic Priorities, including the Advanced Mentoring Program, Career Channels, global learning; alumni connections, community-based learning and off-campus partnerships; and/or other types of entrepreneurial, experiential, integrative, and collaborative learning;
- a statement that articulates the ways in which the department/program addresses and/or advances the college's commitment to anti-racism, equity and inclusion and the goals of the Becoming Better initiative.

- information on how the department/program assesses student learning and a summary of the results of such assessments.
2. Near the beginning of the process, departments and programs undergoing external review will work with the Provost's Office to identify two-three external professionals in the discipline or programmatic area who can participate in the review process as peer consultants.
 3. The outcome of the review may include a proposal for a revised curriculum, a proposal for collaborative partnerships or mergers with other programs, a proposal for new staffing, and/or a plan for program marketing and recruitment and retention of students.