



Open Pathway
Quality Initiative Institutional Proposal

The enclosed Quality Initiative proposal represents the work that the institution will undertake to fulfill the Improvement Process of the Open Pathway.

Timothy R. Lannon

11/15/13

Signature of Institution's President or Chancellor

Date

Timothy R. Lannon, SJ, President

Printed/Typed Name and Title

Creighton University

Name of Institution

Omaha, Nebraska

City and State

The institution completes the Quality Initiative proposal by responding to the questions in each category of the template. The institution may choose to include a brief implementation plan that addresses many of the questions below and replaces portions of the outline. Proposals should be no more than 4,500 words.

Overview of the Quality Initiative

- 1. Provide a title and brief description of the Quality Initiative. Explain whether the initiative will begin and be completed during the Quality Initiative period or if it is part of work already in progress or will achieve a key milestone in the work of a longer initiative.**

Academic Effectiveness and Program Review Initiative

Abstract:

Societal concerns for quality of higher education, degree qualifications, employability and affordability have been a central focus of the current institutional strategic planning process. Creighton's strategic plan is focused on enhanced fiscal stability, institutional efficiency and accountability, and targeted enrollment growth. This Quality Initiative (QI) project focuses on several initiatives found in our Institutional Effectiveness Program. These initiatives are Annual Academic Effectiveness Reporting, Academic Program Review, and New Academic Program Approval.



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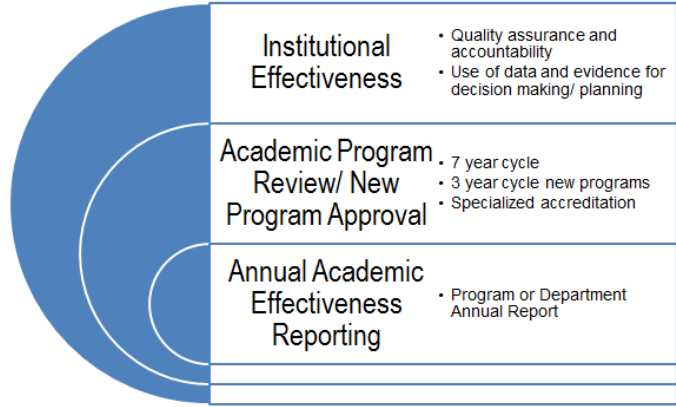
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Academic Effectiveness and Program Review Initiative

Abstract:

Societal concerns for quality of higher education, degree qualifications, employability and affordability have been a central focus of the current institutional strategic planning process. Creighton's strategic plan is focused on enhanced fiscal stability, institutional efficiency and accountability, and targeted enrollment growth. This Quality Initiative (QI) project focuses on several initiatives found in our Institutional Effectiveness Program. These initiatives are Annual Academic Effectiveness Reporting, Academic Program Review, and New Academic Program Approval.

Open Pathway: Quality Initiative Institutional Proposal



Development and approval of key institutional policies for enhanced accountability have been approved by the Academic and Faculty Councils, and the President’s Council. The QI project helps the institution make decisions about allocation of resources that are aligned with mission and strategic initiatives. Administrative leadership including the Board of Trustees is committed to moving the institution forward to a financially secure future.

Timeline:

Initiatives	Phases	Evaluation Criteria for Assessing Progress	Timeline
1. Annual Academic Effectiveness Reporting			
	1.1 Develop a shared university-wide list of educational effectiveness indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete set of shared educational effectiveness indicators 	AY 2013-2014
	1.2 Collaborate with data warehouse architect and business intelligence staff to build automated reporting mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct university-wide mechanism for all academic program reports (designed by data warehouse staff) 	AY 2014-2015
	1.3 Execution phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program or department annual reports submitted to the Provost’s Office Greater consistency/evidence for comparisons across programs 	AY 2014-2015 AY 2015-2016
2. Academic Program Review			
	2.1 Implement a University-wide Program Review policy which includes shared standards across all schools and colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete set of shared standards across all schools and colleges University-wide schedule for program review across all schools and colleges 	AY 2013-2014 AY 2013-2014
	2.2 Pilot the revised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report of Program 	AY 2014-2015

	review process	Reviews to Provost (University-wide mechanism for all academic program reports, designed by data warehouse staff)	
	2.3 Full implementation of program review processes across all schools and colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater consistency/evidence for comparisons across programs 	AY 2015-2016
3. New Academic Program Approval Process			
	3.1 Formation of University-wide academic program approval review committee chaired by Provost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation by the Provost of committee identified in the Academic Program Approval policy. 	AY 2013-2014
	3.2 Pilot new academic approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision of the committee review process based on pilot data 	AY 2013-2014
	3.3 Full implementation of new program approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of a university-wide process of prioritizing development of new academic programs 	AY 2013-2014

All initial results will be reported out in our project report. – AY 2015-2016
 Comprehensive visit—AY 2016-1017

Sufficiency of the Initiative’s Scope and Significance

2. Explain why the proposed initiative is relevant and significant for the institution.

One of Creighton’s strengths is its modest size and robust complexity. Creighton has 9 schools and colleges and an undergraduate, graduate and professional student enrollment of approximately 8,000. This diversity of professional schools and colleges is also one of Creighton’s challenges. Historically, academic review has been the purview of each college or school. Each school/college assumed responsibility for its program review and procedures as well as new program planning procedures. While this recognized the unique nature of each school/college and its programs, it led to inconsistency in review criteria and the review process. This also leads to redundancy and inefficient/ineffective use of resources and diminished opportunities for strong inter-professional collaboration across all schools and colleges.

During the 2009-10 academic year, Creighton engaged in a campus-wide program prioritization process. While this process provided an excellent campus wide initiative for a more efficient process of review, it was only a beginning point as an ongoing process of robust review is needed to make informed decisions for efficient academic planning.

President Fr. Timothy Lannon has charged the institution to work as “One Creighton.” In alignment with this charge, a shared, robust system of academic program review and new academic program approval is necessary. These processes need to be well integrated with program assessment and incorporate standard metrics across all our programs.

The President set the creation of university-wide policies and procedures for academic program review and new academic program approval as one of his presidential priorities in AY 2011-12. The University's Academic Program Review and New Academic Program Planning policies were developed by a university task force and approved in fall 2012. These new policies and procedures are intended to serve as a springboard for planning and implementation that is consistent with strategic planning and in alignment with the academic, administrative and finance functions of the University. They provide a mechanism for making evidence-based decisions regarding present and future academic programming.

As an extension of the Academic Program Review, each program will provide an Annual Academic Effectiveness Report to the Provost. These reports will allow for the comparison of Academic Programs and will be instrumental in making budgetary decisions regarding the allocation of resources to the greatest benefit of the university.

3. Explain the intended impact of the initiative on the institution and its academic core.

A core element in Creighton University's mission statement is that "*Creighton is a Catholic and Jesuit comprehensive university committed to excellence in its selected undergraduate, graduate and professional programs.*" As such, the university must be judicious in its *selected* programs. This is particularly true considering the current contexts of the US economy and higher education. Creating an infrastructure to carefully review existing academic programs and create new programs is essential. The proposed quality initiative will allow Creighton to ensure the continued financial viability and excellence in our programs while being more accountable to pertinent stakeholders. The limited success of the past program prioritization process and current financial challenges highlight the need for a standard set of measures that can be used for decision making for program review and academic planning. The proposed plan will provide essential tools for the institution's strategic plan for efficient growth. Implementing an institutional process of academic planning will facilitate thoughtful growth in academic programs as Creighton's modest size, yet complexity is well situated to leverage the liberal arts with professional and graduate programs.

Specifically, the QI initiative will have the following impact:

1. The QI initiative will facilitate institutional development of a standard set of measures to evaluate the effectiveness of each academic program in meeting the university's mission and goals. Additionally, academic programs must meet the institutional mission and goals while balancing societal relevance, cost and other issues. The initiative will allow the university to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each program, the program's viability, and help to strategically aid each program in its planning for the future. It also insures a more comprehensive, systematic and ongoing approach to quality improvement of programs.
2. The QI initiative will increase transparency of the "academic health" of each program for university planning. A critical piece to the academic review is an assessment of the effectiveness of a present program in meeting the outcomes of student learning as delineated by the program and by the university. Standard metrics (e.g., employment rates, certification pass rates, etc.), direct and indirect measures of student learning, and the ability of each program to meet these metrics, will create more transparency to both the academic program and the university in a formal review process.

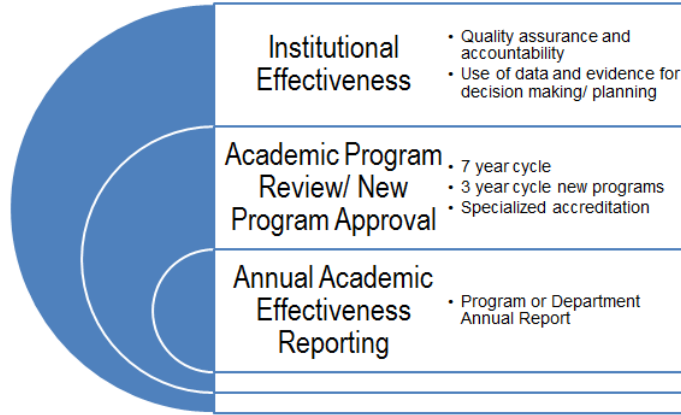
Therefore, the implementation and assessment of the Academic Program Review and New Academic Program Planning policies will bridge academic, administrative, and financial functions in an integrated plan for achievement of our strategic priorities and the university's educational mission.

Clarity of the Initiative’s Purpose

4. Describe the purposes and goals for the initiative.

The central purpose of this quality initiative (see Figure 1) is to fully implement a university-wide performance-based academic quality review, planning, and improvement process.

Figure 1. Academic Program/Annual Accountability Measures



The working goals for the project include:

- Implementation of two new institutional policies, New Program Approval Policy and the Academic Program Review policy.
- Formation of a University-wide Academic Planning Review committee chaired by the Provost.
- Establish an Annual Academic Effectiveness Reporting process to deliver program accountability metrics. These metrics will be used to complement the data currently being gathered as part of the financial review model and annual assessment reports. These academic effectiveness metrics will be gathered annually across all programs.
- Develop a university-wide program review schedule across all schools and colleges.
- Under the direction of the Provost, integrate the use of academic quality improvement data (program review, annual academic metrics including assessment of student learning, and financial data) into regular academic planning.

5. Describe how the institution will evaluate progress, make adjustments, and determine what has been accomplished.

Under the recently established Provost organizational structure, there is a Learning and Assessment Team, led by a newly appointed Vice Provost for Learning and Assessment, who also serves as the Accreditation Liaison Officer. This group will be monitoring the quarterly check points related to the Quality Initiative timeline. The university will establish quarterly checkpoints to verify that adequate progress is being made on the phases to be delivered within the current academic year. If the progress is not adequate to meet the timelines, additional resources will be allocated as appropriate. The Learning and Assessment team will provide essential communication to the President’s and Deans’ Councils. The communication flow will allow initiatives to be tasked to the appropriate parties. An institutional mechanism is already in place for periodic and regular updates related to HLC accreditation and institutional effectiveness.

Projections to track evaluation of the initiative are listed in the following table.

Initiatives/ Timeline	Phases	Evaluation Criteria for Assessing Progress	Components
1. Annual Academic Effectiveness Reporting			
AY 2013-2014	1.1 Develop a shared university-wide list of educational effectiveness indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete set of shared educational effectiveness indicators 	Metrics for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Outcomes • Instructional Productivity • Research/Scholarship
AY 2014-2015	1.2 Collaborate with data warehouse architect and business intelligence staff to build automated reporting mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct university-wide mechanism for all academic program reports (designed by data warehouse staff) 	Collaboration with data warehouse architect and business intelligence staff
AY 2014-2015 AY 2015-2016	1.3 Execution phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program or department annual reports submitted to the Provost's Office • Greater consistency/evidence for comparisons across programs 	Communication and training of stakeholders
2. Academic Program Review			
AY 2013-2014	2.1 Implement Program Review policy which includes shared standards across all schools and colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete set of shared standards across all schools and colleges • University-wide schedule for program review across all schools and colleges 	Build a shared template for data collection for program review (Student metrics (e.g., admitting QPA's, ACT); faculty metrics (tenure, non-tenure, scholarship, grants); graduate metrics (e.g., employment rates, graduate school pursuit, board pass rates, certifications); program metrics (e.g., credit hour production, degrees conferred per program); financial metrics)
AY 2014-2015	2.2 Pilot the revised review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report of Program Reviews to Provost (University-wide mechanism for all academic program reports, designed by data warehouse staff) 	Pilot and revise
AY 2015-2016	2.3 Full implementation of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater consistency/evidence 	Development of annual report to Provost

	program review processes across all schools and colleges	for comparisons across programs	
3. New Academic Program Approval Process			
AY 2013-2014	3.1 Formation of university-wide academic program approval review committee chaired by Provost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation by the Provost of committee identified in the Academic Program Approval policy. 	Pre-Proposal Formal Proposal Development/Internal Unit Approval University Review and Approval
AY 2013-2014	3.2 Pilot new academic approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision of the committee review process based on pilot data 	Pilot and revise
AY 2013-2014	3.3 Full implementation of new program approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of a university-wide process of prioritizing development of new academic programs 	Review new program approval documentation to ensure consistency.

Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

6. Describe the level of support for the initiative by internal or external stakeholders.

Creighton’s strategic plan is focused on enhanced fiscal stability, institutional efficiency and accountability, and targeted enrollment growth. Developing a university-wide system of accountability through implementing the Quality Initiative Project is a critical component of tracking institutional effectiveness. Academic and Faculty Council, the President’s Council and the Deans’ Council have approved key institutional policies for enhanced accountability. This QI project will help the institution make resource allocation decisions that are aligned with mission and strategic initiatives. Administrative leadership including the Board of Trustees is committed to moving the institution forward to a financially secure future.

7. Identify the groups and individuals that will lead or be directly involved in implementing the initiative.

Program directors and department chairs will provide the primary program content for new academic program proposals, academic program reviews and annual academic effectiveness reports. These requests and reports will be reviewed and amended by the respective Deans. They will also be reviewed and amended by the Deans’ Council, which meets quarterly. New program proposals are to be reviewed by each school/college’s respective committee or governing board. Finally, for new program approvals, an Executive Committee will be created by the Provost to oversee the process, track the submission, and report the results.

The oversight and reporting requirements for the Academic Program Review process will be conducted by a subcommittee of the University Assessment Committee (UAC), under the direction of the Associate Vice Provost for Academic Excellence and Assessment. The program review recommendations of the UAC will ultimately be reviewed and acted up by the Deans, Provost, and the President.

8. List the human, financial, technological and other resources that the institution has committed to this initiative.

Although this Quality Initiative is primarily focused on academic units and programs, the institution has committed resources from all areas of the campus in support of reviewing and improving academic quality. Consistent with our “One Creighton” efforts, the administrative and academic units support each other’s work, as illustrated in this initiative.

Specifically, significant human resources will drive and sustain this initiative. As described in #7, faculty, Department and Program Chairs, Deans, Provost, and University President will ultimately control the initiatives. The Registrar’s Office, the Office for Academic Excellence and Assessment and Institutional Research staff, the membership of the University Assessment Committee, the HLC Task Force membership, and the Executive Committee for Academic Planning Review will further resource the faculty and Senior Academic Leadership in developing and sustaining these academic quality systems. Under the recently established Provost organizational structure, a Learning and Assessment Team, led by a newly appointed Vice Provost, who also serves as the Accreditation Liaison Officer will provide oversight on this project.

Financial and technological campus initiatives will encompass these academic quality programs and include: the Financial Review Model, Academic and Student Outcome Metrics taskforce, our assessment reporting system, data warehouse, and other Division of Information Technology resources. Finally, as this academic quality review and planning initiative is an outgrowth of larger university planning processes (e.g., strategic planning, financial review models), these campus efforts and consultants’ expertise will contribute to this academic quality initiative.

In summary, our challenge is not in identifying the necessary resources--the university has and continues to commit significant resources to the successful completion of this initiative--our ongoing challenge is coordinating our existing resources in more effective and efficient ways.

Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative (The institution may include a brief implementation or action plan.)

9. Describe the primary activities of the initiative and timeline for implementing them.

Annual Academic Effectiveness Reporting

The timeline for the activities corresponding to the objectives for Annual Academic Effectiveness Reporting include:

Objective	Components	Timeline
1. Develop a university-wide list of educational effectiveness indicators. Develop a database set identifying the metrics and minimum data set required by each program	Metrics for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Outcomes • Instructional Productivity • Research/Scholarship 	AY 2013-2014
2. Create a common template and procedures for annual data collection.	Collaboration with data warehouse architect and business intelligence staff	AY 2014-2015
3. Enhance culture of annual assessment and program evaluation	Communication and training of stakeholders	Ongoing

Program Review

The timeline for the activities corresponding to the objectives for Program Review include:

Objective	Components	Timeline
1. Develop a university-wide common academic program database set identifying the metrics and minimum data set required by each program	Student metrics (e.g., admitting QPA's, ACT); faculty metrics (tenure, non-tenure, scholarship, grants); graduate metrics (e.g., employment rates, graduate school pursuit, board pass rates, certifications); program metrics (e.g., credit hour production, degrees conferred per program); financial metrics	AY 2013-2014
2. Establish a timetable for review of the present academic programs for each college/school	Collaborate with schools/colleges to determine timeline	AY 2013-2014
3. Develop self-study guidelines and templates	Planning and preparation phase Self-study Reporting Phase Program Review Phase Summary Phase Recommendation and Action Phase	AY 2013-2014
4. Pilot procedures	Pilot with revisions	AY 2014-2015
5. Develop process for annual report to Provost		AY 2014-2015

New Academic Program Approval Process

The timeline for the activities corresponding to the objectives for New Academic Program Approval Process includes:

Objective	Components	Timeline
1. Implementation of the New Program Approval Policy requires formation of a University wide Academic Planning Review committee chaired by the Provost or designee	Pre-Proposal Formal Proposal Development/Internal Unit Approval University Review and Approval	AY 2013-2014
2. Pilot new academic program approval process	Pilot and revise	AY 2013-2014

Institutional Contact for Quality Initiative Proposal

Include the name(s) of the primary contact(s) for the Quality Initiative.

Gail M. Jensen, Dean Graduate School/University College; Vice Provost for Learning and Assessment

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Creighton University

Institution





Higher Learning Commission
A commission of the North Central Association

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