

Adrienne Lavine
Professor and Immediate Past
Senate Chair
48-121 Engineering IV
Box 159710
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1597
lavine@seas.ucla.edu

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TO: Robert Fink, UgC Chair

FROM: Adrienne Lavine, Chair, WASC Workgroup on Academic Senate Program Reviews

RE: Pilot Program to Enhance the Evaluation of Undergraduate Education within the Academic Senate Program Review Process

As you are aware, the WASC Institutional Proposal, which was approved by the Academic Senate last year, included a proposal which relates to the Academic Senate Review Process. WASC requires us to complete an "Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators" that must include information about educational goals of each program, where they are published, and what evidence exists that they are being met. Rather than requiring departments to fill out yet another form that would have questionable value to them, UCLA's WASC steering committee proposed to integrate this WASC requirement into the Academic Senate Review Process in such a way that it is consonant with our vision of peer review of academic programs and can enhance departments' opportunity to reflect upon and potentially improve their educational programs. We do not wish to make the review process more onerous for departments, but rather intend to focus their self-reviews of undergraduate programs in a particular way, as will be described below. (Please note that we are beginning with undergraduate programs rather than graduate for various reasons.)

We, the WASC Workgroup on Academic Senate Program Reviews, are now coming to Undergraduate Council to request its support in moving forward with this proposal. We envision this as a pilot program which would provide needed input for UCLA's WASC review, but which would evolve, if Undergraduate Council ultimately sees fit, into a permanent, probably modest, modification of the Guidelines for the Self-Review (Section C, Undergraduate Programs).

Here is what we propose at this time. A letter will go out to departments explaining the situation and delineating three steps that departments are expected to take over time (not necessarily all with equal thoroughness in the context of the current review):

- a. Stating educational goals and publishing them so that students are aware of what the program expects them to achieve. *Stating goals is already a requirement in the current review process; publishing them is not.*
- b. Articulating how their goals for undergraduate education are currently being implemented and any plans they are considering for changes. *This is paraphrased from the current Guidelines for the Review Process, Section C.*

- c. Examining evidence that the department thinks is relevant in order to evaluate whether goals are being met. Examples could include quality of student work in key courses, placement of students in graduate programs or jobs, students doing research with faculty, etc. *This step is consistent with the current review process and is alluded to in the phrase “providing evidence and support as appropriate” in the current Guidelines. However, step c sharpens the focus on the evaluation component.*

The letter would then ask departments to do two things:

1. Fill out a brief survey, the goal of which is to establish where they are in the sequence of steps a, b, c. The survey would ask whether their department has explicitly stated educational goals for undergraduates, whether and where they are published, whether their current educational program is in need of changes to align with the goals, and whether they presently consider any evidence in order to evaluate whether goals are being met. The due date for this would be fairly soon.
2. Relative to the baseline established in #1, decide on what next steps they will take to make progress on a, b, and c. Their self-review should state their plans. Since steps a and b are already articulated in the current Guidelines (other than publishing), they should be fully addressed in the self-review. Since step c has a newly sharpened focus, we will ask that they simply make progress on this step. For example, they could choose one or two educational goals to evaluate. Departments should accomplish what they propose by the time of the site visit, or have made headway if it requires a longer time to implement.

At the time of the site visit, the review team will have the survey to see where the department started, and will look to see if they have accomplished what they stated they would do in #2.

We hope that this appears to Undergraduate Council as a modest enhancement of the current review process which would suit our institution and simultaneously satisfy WASC's requirements. We are asking for Ugc's general support, and of course we welcome any comments.

Please let me know if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Adrienne Lavine

cc: Michael Jura
Ray Knapp
Kathleen Komar
Reynaldo Macias
David Rigby
Judith Smith