Frequently Asked Questions for the website:

Purpose of Review

1. Why must OCC perform both Assessment and Curriculum Review?
   At OCC, we use the term "assessment" to refer to the ongoing assessment of student learning. Assessment is performed at the classroom level using various methods by the instructor and also done at regular intervals at the program and discipline levels. Curriculum Review takes place at longer intervals and allows you to observe trends in student learning over multiple years. In addition, trends in other performance indices are reviewed including enrollment, completion rates, and community need. The review is an opportunity to take a broader view of the program or discipline and discuss the direction of the program or discipline with fellow faculty and the dean. Both assessment of student learning and systematic review of curriculum are included in the Educational Master Plan (EMP) and both must be performed in order to maintain compliance with HLC accreditation standards.

2. Does administration use the review to make decisions about programs or courses?

   The review gives a summary of trends in a program or discipline that is easy to read and contains a lot of information. However, this information is always available to the administration and this information, along with other input, is considered by the administration when making choices about the direction of a program or discipline. The review offers faculty a chance to respond to the data. Administration can then take Faculty input into consideration as they look at performance data.

3. Is the review used as a basis for sun setting courses or programs?

   The CRC review process is only undergone by programs and disciplines that are not in danger of deactivation. Many of the metrics used in the review process are the same as those used to make decisions regarding the deactivation of a program, but again, curricula undergoing review are in the review process so that improvements can be made. Curricula at risk for deactivation will not undergo the regular curriculum review process, as more intensive research and collaboration is warranted.

Review Report & Data

4. What if there is information that I think is relevant that does not address a specific question in the review?

   You may add information that you think is relevant in the response areas in the review report, even if it does not directly address a specific question. You may also add information in section one or eight which asks more general questions.

5. Can I challenge the data or its interpretation in the review document?

   Data presented in the review have been neither analyzed nor interpreted. The data in the review report are presented as stored in the college records. At times, data are collapsed into meaningful summary categories to facilitate ease of interpretation. The data are generated automatically and systematically, and checked by a data analyst. However, concerns about the review data should be brought to your academic dean as soon as it is discovered. You should not wait until the end of the review process to express your concerns. If there is no resolution, you should state the basis of your concern in the response section of the review.

6. Can I request data that is not included in the original review report?

Yes. At the pre-review meeting the draft review report will be discussed and you will have time to review the document. If there are data that you think would add to the quality of the review, you should discuss this with your dean. If deemed appropriate and the data can be supplied very quickly, it will be added to the revised review report. Sometimes, however, the data may take too long to collect. In this case, an action strategy should be written to address the need for this additional data.

7. Can I use my own data or information in the review?

Yes, including additional data or information to support your interpretation or argument is ideal. The standard data and information used in the review have been evaluated for reliability, validity and accuracy. The same standard is expected of any data or information you would add to the review. Anecdotal data should be identified as such. Any additional data or information added to the review should be added in the response areas.

8. Who do I contact if I have questions about the data or the questions posed in the review document?

Your dean will be familiar with the data in the review document. Specific questions concerning data or the questions in the review document should be directed to your dean. Your dean will follow-up with the office of CSL for further clarification if needed.

Benchmarks

9. What is a benchmark?

A benchmark is a standard goal that will help you focus on a few key areas for improvement. A benchmark helps you track the performance of a discipline or program over time, and also allows for comparisons between programs and disciplines.

10. Who establishes the benchmarks?

There are several different benchmarks in the review. The benchmarks concerning student learning are established by the faculty in your program or discipline as part of the development of the plan for assessment of programs and common course outcomes. The enrollment benchmark of 80% of seats taken and the completions benchmark (20 graduates over three year period) were established by academic administration. The transferability benchmark is based on the average transferability of general education courses.

11. What happens if my program or discipline does not meet the benchmarks?

If a program or discipline does not meet a benchmark, you will be asked to reflect on the factors that may have limited the program or discipline's ability to meet these benchmarks and create action strategies for improvement. Programs and disciplines are not penalized for not meeting benchmarks. Benchmarks are intended to help faculty identify priority areas for improvement, so that improvement efforts are focused on the areas that most need attention.

Action Strategies

12. Who creates the action strategies?

The action strategies are created by the faculty in conjunction with their academic dean. The creation of the action strategies requires discussion among the faculty and with the academic dean. The post-review meetings will also further the discussion of action strategies.

13. Who keeps track of the action strategies?

The implementation and progress of action strategies are tracked by faculty and their dean. The office of CSL maintains a database and will provide a tracking system. In addition, other groups will be provided with action strategy updates, such as the CRC and administrators responsible for integrated planning.

14. If action strategies are signed, will they be followed up on by the administration?

Action strategies that flow out of the review process will generally be considered as a higher priority than requests made by a program or discipline that does not have a history of careful review. However, the administration is still constrained by considerations of the needs of other programs and disciplines, the integrated planning of the college, and budget. While action strategies are given higher priority, there may be reasons that they cannot be implemented. These, as with all others, will be tracked and recorded.

15. Does the program or discipline have responsibilities after the review is over?

Yes. With the development and approval of action strategies, people responsible for the implementation of these actions are identified and held accountable for seeing through the changes described. Many times, this will be the program/discipline faculty.

Collaboration

16. What happens if faculty cannot reach a consensus?

The review report should reflect the point of view of all faculty members within the program or discipline. Different points of view, when synthesized into a single response, adds strength to a review because different aspects of an issue may be addressed. In addition, it will increase the likelihood that faculty members with dissenting opinions will approve the report since the content of the review report will have captured their viewpoint.

17. What happens if a faculty member chooses to not participate in the review process?

Participation by all full and part-time faculty members within a program or discipline should be encouraged as an opportunity to express opinions regarding the direction of the program or discipline. In addition, participation in assessment and review of curriculum is a requirement under the Faculty Master Agreement. However, failure of a faculty member to participate will ultimately be the concern of the dean. Lack of participation by faculty members within a discipline should not be allowed to hinder the progress of the majority of faculty who will participate in the review. Please see our guide to increasing collaboration in review.

Curriculum Review Committee

18. What is the role of the CRC?

The Curriculum Review Committee is a standing committee of the Academic Senate. The role of the CRC is to work with fellow faculty to facilitate the review process and to collaborate with the Office of Curriculum and Student Learning in the implementation and ongoing improvement of the review process. The CRC is the contact point for the faculty for their input on review and for any questions or concerns they have during their review process.

19. Why do the members of CRC have to read and approve review documents?

Consideration for approval by the CRC is necessary to ensure that the integrity of the senate approved process of curriculum review is maintained. The use of a standard rubric to score review documents also provides information to the committee that can facilitate recommendations for improvements to the review process. The CRC does <u>NOT</u> base approval on the specific content of the review related to the program or discipline, in deference to the expertise of the faculty and dean.

20. Can I contact the CRC if I am not the lead reviewer?

Yes. Any faculty member whose program or discipline is undergoing review is welcome to contact the Lead reviewer, Dean, or the CRC.