**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater**

**Committee Form: Review of Audit & Review Self-Studies**

**Graduate Programs**

Program: MS-Occupational & Environmental Safety & Health

**I. Program Purpose & Overview**

**A. Centrality**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| a. The program contributes to the fulfillment of UW-Whitewater’s mission, core values, and Strategic Plan. | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| b. The program is well-integrated with other undergraduate and graduate programs offered at UW-W as appropriate. |  | 7 | 3 |
| c. The program has been responsive to actions recommended from the previous Audit and Review Report. | 3(1?) | 4 | 2 |

Comments:

--The self-study implies that the program fits with the University’s mission (e.g., commitment to diversity, increase in the number of minority students, etc.). However, the self-study doesn’t explicitly cite any components of the University’s Mission or Strategic Plan and specifically show how the program supports the components.

--The report mentions the “natural extensions of major and minor UG degrees” but doesn’t give specifics on how this program fits with or interacts with other graduate or undergraduate programs on campus (e.g., chemistry or biology).

--The self-study didn’t explicitly address how the program has responded to the recommendations from the previous Audit & Review.

**B. Program Mission, Goals, & Accomplishments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| a. The program’s mission statement aligns with the mission of the School of Graduate Studies. | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| b. Goals and objectives were undertaken during the review period to improve or advance the program. |  | 3 | 7 |
| c. The program will be considering revisions supported by data to its mission, goals, and/or objectives in the upcoming review period. | 2(1?) | 5 | 2 |
| d. Faculty and students involved in the program are engaged with the region in ways that benefit both the community and the program. |  |  | 10 |
| e. The program achieved or maintained accreditation (if applicable) and/or earned recognition or awards. | 1 | 6 | 3 |

Comments:

--The self-study doesn’t explicitly address the ways in which the program’s mission is aligned with the Mission of the School of Graduate Studies.

--The program cites multiple collaborations with public and private organizations, and has been selected as a new OSHA Training Institute Education Center.

--The program is accredited by the Institute for Safety & Health Management. The self-study also reports that the decision was made not to seek ABET accreditation, and that the decision was made after extensive input from the Advisory Board. The program appears to adhere to some requirements anyway. It would be useful to include a bit more in explanation as to why the cost-benefit balance didn’t support seeking ABET accreditation.

--The self-study reports that program faculty are considering a significant restructuring of the program due to a changing student demographic, including the possibility of converting it to an all-online program. However, it isn’t clear how any program evaluation data is being considered in discussing potential changes to the program.

**II. Assessment: Curriculum & the Assessment of Students’ Learning**

**A. Curriculum**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| a. The program has a clearly articulated, efficient, and purposeful curriculum, complete with a capstone experience. |  | 3 | 7 |
| b. Expectations of graduate students differ from undergraduate students in dual-listed courses. | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| c. The program provides opportunities for students to learn in ways that extend beyond the classroom. |  | 3 | 7 |
| d. Online courses are evaluated in ways that ensure effective delivery and continuous improvement (if applicable). | 3 | 4 | 1 |

Comments:

--The program offers a number of undergraduate/graduate courses, but does not specify how graduate expectations in dual-listed courses differ in content, intensity, and self-direction from the expectations of undergraduate students.

--While the survey of professionals was interesting, it is not clear how this information has been used for marketing purposes or for program development.

--The self-study reports that online courses are offered, but doesn’t address how they are being evaluated. This may become more important as the program moves to more/totally online courses.

--The program has a pair of capstone options, though it isn’t clear the extent to which either of the two alternatives (i.e., research project with comprehensive exam; or thesis) is used in assessing learning outcomes of the curriculum.

**B. Assessment of Student Learning**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| a. The program has clearly articulated learning performance outcomes for students. | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| b. The program’s curriculum aligns with the student learning performance outcomes. | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| c. Research/scholarly activity, as defined by the program, is incorporated in the achievement of student learning outcomes. | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| d. The program collected assessment data during the review period allowing judgments about the extent to which students are achieving learning performance outcomes. | 1 | 6 | 3 |
| e. The program has made changes/improvements during the review period that clearly align with the assessment data collected during the current (or previous) review period. | 3(1?) | 4 | 1 |
| f. Results of assessment efforts have been shared with internal and external constituencies. | 3(1?) | 3 | 3 |

Comments:

--The program has a series of construct areas or topics that will be covered in class. However, it remains unclear as to what students in the program are expected to be able to do, or what they are supposed to know, relative to each construct. Learning outcomes should be developed and phrased in behavioral or measurable terms. Program improvement is very difficult without clearer statements of what students are expected to know or be able to do upon completion of the program. Moreover, not all of the learning constructs are covered in the core classes, so program faculty should identify the courses in which these learning constructs are covered.

--The self-study reports assessment data in general terms, but doesn’t differentiate between data that was collected for undergraduate majors and graduate students in the program. Thus, there is no way to tell the satisfaction of MS graduates, nor is there a way to know how practicum supervisors rated graduate students’ preparation.

--The link between the survey data that was collected (i.e., from professionals asking “what’s important to have in a program” and student exit survey of the “value” of each course in their education) and the curriculum is not evident.

--External assessment data is quite thorough, the practicum assessment in particular.

--There appear to be many opportunities for collecting assessment data, and very little actual data collected or shared. The program relies on indirect internal assessment data (opinions), and not much of that data was reported. Direct assessment of students’ skills is still lacking, and it appears that very little has been done in the review period to improve the program relative to academic assessment work.

--There is no evidence in the self-study that program faculty are using assessment data to “close the loop,” or to show how assessment data is being used to drive changes to the program. The self-study reports that program faculty have been pursuing improvement, but there is no information on what guides that improvement.

--The self-study doesn’t address if or how assessment results are shared with constituencies.

**III. Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation**

**A. Trend Data**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| a. Five-year enrollments trends reflect program vitality and sustainability. |  | 7 | 3 |
| b. Graduation rates indicate that students complete the program in a timely manner. | 2 | 5 | 3 |

Comments:

--From the data in the self-study, it is hard to tell if the enrollment data is encouraging or discouraging.

**B. Demand for Graduates**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| a. Graduates of the program find employment or continue their education. | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| b. Data suggests that employment opportunities for graduates of this program will remain strong. | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| c. Program is cognizant of differences in student populations (e.g., full-time/part-time students, working adults, recent undergraduate degree recipients, etc.) | 1 | 4(1?) | 4 |
| d. The program effectively recruits prospective students and tracks graduates of the program. | 2 | 5 | 3 |

Comments:

--Information on employment of graduates is based on anecdotes. It would be useful to have actually data on this. Though difficult, better tracking of graduates would be useful as a way to further evaluate the program, generate more enrollment, etc.

--Insufficient information on the demand for the program. Data from an external source (such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics) could be used to substantiate the claim that jobs are available for graduates.

--The self-study mentions a Recruitment Committee, which is good, but no information is given about the activities of this Committee.

**C. Comparative Advantage(s)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has unique features that distinguish it from competing programs—giving it a competitive edge. |  | 1(1?) | 8 |

Comments:

--Lots of advantages here—only MS in the State, has certificate programs in Occupational Ergonomics & in Construction Safety, is an OSHA Training Institute Education Center, etc.

**IV. Resource Availability & Development**

**A. Graduate Faculty Characteristics**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| a. The preparation and work experience of the graduate faculty is conducive to the effective delivery of the program. |  | 2 | 8 |
| b. The program has identified staffing needs and pending changes that will affect the delivery of the program. | 2 | 1 | 7 |

Comments:

--Excellent faculty resources.

--Good ethnic diversity, particularly in such a small number of faculty. There is at least one female (in what I assume is a heavily male-dominated field).

--The self-study form asks for a few paragraphs of explanation to contextualize the characteristics of the faculty. This was not included in the self-study.

**B. Teaching & Learning Enhancement**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty engage in activities to improve their teaching, advising, involvement in course or curricular revision, new course development, etc. | 2 | 3 | 5 |

Comments:

--Faculty participation, as it appears in the appendices, is uneven in this area.

-- The self-study form asks for a few paragraphs of explanation to contextualize the contributions of the faculty in teaching and learning enhancement activities. This was not included in the self-study.

**C. Research & other Scholarly/Creative Activities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty engage in scholarly/creative activity in ways that support or advance the graduate program. | 1 | 4 | 5 |

Comments:

--Research expectations of faculty teaching graduate courses are not clear.

-- The self-study form asks for a few paragraphs of explanation to contextualize the contributions of the faculty in research and scholarly/creative activities. This was not included in the self-study. There was some evidence in the vitae of program faculty, but it was hard to find.

**D. External Funding**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty pursue funding through grants, contract, and/or gifts. |  |  | 10 |

Comments:

--Large number of faculty have received grants, with an impressive amount of external funding (over $1,000,000 obtained).

**E. Professional & Public Service**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty engage in professional and public service in ways that benefit internal and external constituencies. | 1 | 2 | 6 |

Comments:

--Graduate faculty are mostly active, and appear to give generously of their time and expertise in service to the College, campus, community, region, the profession, and the academic discipline.

-- The self-study form asks for a few paragraphs of explanation to contextualize the contributions of the faculty in professional and public service activities. This was not included in the self-study.

**F. Resources for Students in the Program**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has adequate personnel, student help, and service and supplies to serve its graduate student population. |  | 3 | 7 |

Comments:

--Required field experience appears to be especially valuable.

**G. Facilities, Equipment, & Library Holdings**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** | | |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has adequate facilities, equipment, and technological resources to effectively serve its students. |  |  | 10 |

Comments:

**Other comments/questions:**

--This seems like a quality program that is making a significant contribution to the University and the region. Presumably, the program itself is better than as it is described in the self-study. It’s not clear what features distinguish the graduate program from the undergraduate program and what the demand is for a Master’s degree in this field.

--There is evidence, but it is not compelling, that program faculty will be able to devote the time and energies that are needed to develop, deliver, and sustain a degree that is totally online.

--The program appears to have genuine support and interest in its multi-level relationships with external constituencies. The two advisory boards and the many host sites for practicum activities provide a remarkably strong (potential) base for program development and improvement.

**Recommended Actions:**

1. The program needs to develop and implement an assessment plan—a recommendation carried over from the previous Audit & Review. The Assessment Plan should include the following:

A. Assessment of student learning:

* Develop student performance (learning) outcomes that are stated in behavioral terms and are measurable (e.g., use of Bloom’s taxonomy, statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do, etc.), aligning these outcomes with the topics that the program has identified as being important (Appendix D);
* Systematically develop more direct (curriculum-embedded) assessment measures of students skills, based on the performance outcomes that are developed, as well as data from external constituencies (e.g., practicum supervisors, exit questionnaires focused specifically on the learning outcomes);
* Routinely analyze assessment data in ways that lead to improvement of student learning through improvements in the curriculum, instruction, course sequencing, instructional delivery methods, advising, etc, by citing which assessment data leads to which improvement or change; and
* Specify how assessment results are shared with stakeholders, including the advisory boards, and how they impact the program.

B. Curriculum development:

* Continue the development of curricular changes, specifying how curricular changes are linked to assessment data; and
* Track changes in interest, enrollment & graduation, student performance, and graduate placement as the program moves to more/fully online.

C. Enrollment planning and management:

* Consider the program’s goals regarding encouraging and managing growth in the program, especially as it moves toward being more online.

2. Develop a strategic plan for implementing the online program.

* Review feedback and assessment data on the current program to determine potential short-term and long-term changes to the program;
* Prioritize the short-term and long-term changes in order to develop implementation strategies;
* Establish a timeline for implementing changes (e.g., schedule for converting classes to online delivery, etc.);
* Begin to implement the Plan; and
* Periodically review the plan and make adjustments as circumstances warrant.

**Recommended Result:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Insufficient information in the self-study to make a determination; revise self-study & resubmit.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continuation without qualification.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continuation with minor concerns.

\_\_X\*\_\_\_ Continuation with major concerns in one or more of the four areas, & minor concerns in one or

more of the other areas; submit annual progress reports to the College Dean & Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on progress in addressing the major concerns.

\_\_\_\_\_ Withhold recommendation for continuation, place on probation, and require another complete

Audit & Review self-study within 1-3 years, at the Committee’s discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_ Withhold recommendation for continuation, place on probation, recommend placing in

receivership within the college, and require another complete Audit & Review self-study within 1-3 years at the Committee’s discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-continuation of the program.

4/09

\*Submit an update or “progress report” on the Assessment Plan and Strategic Plan for an online program to the Dean of the College and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs by December 2010.