

Higher Learning Commission  
**Self-Study Questionnaire/Report for Non-Instructional Units**

Non-Instructional Unit: Undergraduate Research Program

Individual(s) Completing the Questionnaire/Report: Bruce D. Eshelman

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. Describe in a paragraph or two what your unit does (i.e., the services it provides).  
Provides funding and information to undergraduate students and their mentors for undergraduate research on campus. Serves as the clearing house for on campus grants for students and increases the profile of the campus at the National Conference of Undergraduate Research (NCUR).
2. Who is/are the constituency/ies you serve, and approximately how many of each constituency do you serve annually? (e.g., students, academic departments, classified staff, etc.)
  - We are available to all academic departments on campus their faculty and their students.
  - We annually provide funding to approximately 50 undergraduate students for their research programs and provide travel, room and board at NCUR to an average of about 30 students.
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3. Overview and evaluate the adequacy of the human, physical, and fiscal resources your department deploys to serve students and meet other programmatic needs by answering the questions below:

**Human Resources**

Evaluate the general adequacy of the human resources (i.e., the # of employees (including student help) and their skills) relative to the unit's ability to serve the constituencies identified above and achieve other programmatic goals. Do this by assigning a number between "1" (completely inadequate) to "9" (completely satisfies needs).

7      1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

The program "borrows" a lot of help from other constituencies such as research and sponsored programs. We also get help from the Provost's office.

**Physical Resources**

Evaluate the general adequacy of the physical resources (e.g., office and storage space, supporting technology, other equipment) allocated to the unit relative to the unit's ability to serve the constituencies identified above and achieve other programmatic goals. Do this by assigning a number between "1" (completely inadequate) to "9" (completely satisfies needs).

9      1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

**The program has an office in the library that houses the printer and laminator as well as provides office space for the coordinator**

**Fiscal Resources**

While recognizing that every unit would benefit from a larger budget, evaluate the general adequacy of fiscal resources allocated to the unit to serve its constituencies and achieve other programmatic goals by assigning a number between "1" (completely inadequate) to "9" (completely satisfies needs).

8 1-9

In a paragraph or two, discuss why you've assigned the score you have. Include, in particular, a discussion of unique strengths as well as important needs not being met or opportunities not being explored because of limitations.

As long as the program continues to sustain approximately the same number of students and the Research Student Association can continue to garner SUFAC funds, the program should be able to maintain its present status. Should the # of students grow significantly, or the SUFAC funds decrease substantially, we would not be able to fund as many grants or send as many students to NCUR.

- 4. In a paragraph or two, overview significant changes made in your unit since 1996 (i.e., the last North Central Association Accreditation Visit). (e.g., re-organized, key staff changes, change in purposes, etc.) The program was reorganized in the 2000-2001 academic year by former Provost Prior. The Undergraduate Research Committee was reformulated to contain two members from each of the 4 colleges, a member from the McNair Program, and the coordinator (total 10). The committee was given the charge of improving the overall quality of the student research projects, even if that meant a reduction in number of students served. We have increased the amount of the grants to \$500 and have made the procedure more professionally organized. Grant deadlines are now enforced and there is a more formal procedure for application. We have worked to make the procedure as realistic to external fundings as possible. Submittals are now directed to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. We have also developed formal policies for requesting funding by groups. All this information is kept up to date on the Undergraduate Research Program's webpage. We were also clearly directed to stay within our budget.

In another paragraph or two, describe why these changes occurred.

These changes were made to formalize the program in accordance with the wishes of the Provost.

Again, we wanted to have the program mimic, as closely as possible, what the grant process is like in the external funding arena. We wanted the students to get a realistic view of the grant process.

**MISSION & PLANNING**

- 5. In a paragraph or two, describing any significant projects/initiatives that your unit is planning or currently has underway, but has not yet completed.
- 6. Below are five "core values" the University identifies as central to its purposes and operation. Please evaluate the importance of each core value in terms of how each aligns with the purposes of your unit (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the five values, with those values that align more closely to the purposes of your unit receiving more points).

Core Value	Importance
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	(100 points)
Commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding	30
Development of the individual	30
Personal and professional integrity	15
Commitment to serve	10
Commitment to develop a sense of community, respect for diversity, and global perspectives	15
<b>Total=</b>	<b>100 points</b>

7. Each and every academic and non-academic unit engages in planning for the future. Review the list of variables below and evaluate the extent to which each of the following influences decision-making behind the planning process for your unit (i.e., take a hypothetical 100 points and distribute them among the planning variables listed below, with those variables playing the larger role in your unit's planning efforts receiving more points)

Planning Variables	Importance (100 points)
The mission of the university or the unit	15
Academic assessment data/information relevant to student performance against learning outcomes	15
Other data/information gathered relevant to performance (e.g., Audit & Review feedback)	10
Societal/Cultural trends (e.g., changes in demographics, lifestyles, professions)	5
Campus trends (e.g., changes in university-initiated needs and demands)	5
Technology trends (e.g., technology developments that affect delivery of service)	10
Professional trends (e.g., changes evident at other universities/colleges)	15
Available human resources (e.g., # of employees, talents, etc.) within the unit	10
Available financial resources (e.g., budget, available and accessible \$)	10
Available physical resources (e.g., space, existing technology, etc.)	5
Other:	
<b>Total=</b>	<b>100 points</b>

8. Does your unit have a mission statement?

Yes  No

If you answered "yes," please list the mission statement here. Also, if your mission statement can be accessed on the web, please list the URL here.

<http://acadaff.uww.edu/URP/>

If you answered "yes," please describe how, if at all, this mission statement plays a role in your unit's planning and/or decision-making.

see above

#### OPERATION AND PERFORMANCE

9. What are the major or measurable objectives of the unit?  
 Number of successful students accepted at National and regional conferences to present their research.
10. What outcome measures (i.e., data, information) provide evidence that your unit's objectives are being met?  
 See above



- data collection and analysis, library research
- grantsmanship
- Presentation of results, communication of findings and ideas.

16. Does the unit use data/information to evaluate the extent to which these learning or development-related objectives are, or are not being met?

Yes

No xx

If "yes," please list specific data/information sets that the UW-W Self-Study Committees, and/or the Higher Learning Commission's Visiting Accreditation Team can access to review/consult.

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17. What specific changes to the unit's operation or planning, if any, have resulted from the collection and use of the data/information identified in question #13? Please be specific.

We have altered the way the students are allowed to present their research. Our expectations have been raised for the presentation of work at the university's Undergraduate Research day. Students are now presented prizes in recognition of their work at our Undergraduate Research day.

## SELF-EVALUATION

### Strengths

18. List and prioritize no more than three primary strengths that have emerged in your unit's efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these strengths, you may wish to consider: What does your unit do very well? What good things do people say about your unit? How has your unit aided the campus in meeting its mission? In what ways has your unit "gone beyond the call of duty?"

After identifying each strength, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to unit performance, trend data, information gathered from audits or external agencies visit, etc.

1. Specific Strength: We do allow students to get interested in research and support their projects. With the benefit of the support we have, we can send a strong contingent to the National conference.
  - Supporting Evidence: According to NCUR records, we send the highest or second highest number of students to the conference every year. I have been contacted by the coordinator of the undergraduate research program from Portland State University who has said that they wish to pattern their program after ours.
2. Specific Strength: Encourages students to form close relationships with faculty mentors and pursue research.
  - Supporting Evidence: Many of these students have gone on to graduate school

3. Specific Strength:

- Supporting Evidence:

### Concerns

19. List and prioritize no more than three primary concerns that have emerged in your unit's efforts to meet its mission, goals, or objectives. To identify these concerns, you may wish to consider: What could be improved? What is done poorly? What do we, as a unit, avoid doing, even though we know it's important?

After identifying each concern, specify supporting evidence that suggests that the statement is true. This may include data/information gathered relevant to unit performance, trend data, information gathered from audits or external agencies visit, etc.

Finally, identify one or more recommended actions to address the area of concern. This may include actions that your unit has already begun, actions being planned, or preliminary thinking about how to address the area of concern.

1. Specific Concern: We want to keep the quality up AND increase the number of student participants. We need to do a better job of getting the undergraduate research program in front of students.
  - Supporting Evidence: # of students has decreased
  - Recommended Actions: Advertising campaign, strive to attain a higher profile.
2. Specific Concern: change of coordinator may have negative impact on the program
  - Supporting Evidence: current coordinator's term expires with the end of this school year.
  - Recommended Actions: pick a good one.
3. Specific Concern:
  - Supporting Evidence:
  - Recommended Actions: