

**Agenda and Evaluation Report for
Audit & Review Face-to-Face Meeting
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Occupational Safety Majors and Minors, 2023-2024**

Date: 3/8/2024

Invited: Provost John Chenoweth; Dean Paul Ambrose (Business & Economics); Department Chair/Program Coordinator Donna Vosburgh; faculty and staff in the program; Audit & Review Team Chair Ted Gimbel; Audit & Review team members Denise Roseland, John Ejnik, and Kelly Delaney-Klinger; Assessment Representative Katy Casey

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Overview of review team evaluation, program comments

The review team chair, Dr. Gimble, summarized the review team's evaluation of the short self-study.

- 3) Discussion of Review Team's evaluation:

- a) The program is close to finalizing two articulation agreements (Blackhawk Tech and the CC of the Air Force) and has begun working on another agreement with Cuyamaca College in California. If these agreements are successful, will the program have enough staffing and resources to serve the students?

The Blackhawk articulation agreement is done. The Air Force partnership will work through credits for prior learning (CPL)- not sure of enrollment numbers yet. Whatever is accepted through CPL will include assessment to ensure alignment with ABET. There may be time to space out student enrollment in program courses through staggering completion of general education courses. The anticipate start state of summer 2024.

Cuyamaca – working on transfer paperwork for students at Cuyamaca to complete their studies at UWW.

The program feels comfortable with current resources supporting the increased enrollment based on these partnerships.

- b) There seems to be demand for graduates of this program. What does the program see as the biggest obstacle to attracting students?

The program is working on increasing awareness that the program exists and of careers opportunities in environmental health and safety. They have been working with COBE marketing and communicating career paths with students, including those who are enrolled in the BAAS at the Rock County campus. There were also some course numbering changes to attract students earlier in their academic careers (i.e., freshman and sophomore levels).

- c) What would it take to address issues with the CEC lab to make it fully operational? It seems a lot of time and money has been invested and yet the program is not able to use the space the way it would like.

The use of space at the CEC was launched in 2020, which is when the pandemic hit campus and shut down deliveries and operations. Other issues that arose could not have been anticipated until the lab was up and running. The CEC is currently being used and while there are challenges, it is functional. There were many examples of how it's being used and they enjoy having the lab and find it necessary for the major- the facility helped with ABET accreditation.

The Provost noted that the lease on the CEC may not continue after 2026, and the campus is exploring other options for the lab.

- 4) **Recommended Actions:** The evaluation report lists three recommended actions (see page 5) related to strategic planning, program growth and staffing needs, and lab space at the CEC.
- 5) **Recommended Result:** *Continuation with minor concerns*
 - Please make use of the detailed comments in the evaluation report (below).
 - Please select all applicable boxes and fill in the appropriate year:
 - ☒ Next FULL self-study will be due to the Dean on October 1, 2028 and to the Assessment Office on November 1, 2028.
- 6) Adjourn.

Review team report is attached below, including Recommended Actions and instructions for Progress Reports (if required).

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Review of Audit & Review Self-Studies
Undergraduate Programs, 2023-2024**

Date of Evaluation 10/25/2023 Short Self Study (SS*) x

Program: **Occupational Safety** Major ☒ Minor ☐

Evaluations submitted by: Edward Gimbel; John Ejnik; Kelly Delaney-Klinger; Katy Casey

Review meeting attended by: Edward Gimbel; John Ejnik; Kelly Delaney-Klinger; Denise Roseland; Katy Casey

If the program included introductory remarks, please add any comments you have on this introductory information. (Note: Programs are not required to include introductory remarks.)

Program is accredited until 2028. Accreditation has assessment requirements.

The introductory comments helpfully contextualize the short self-study in light of the program's ABET accreditation process.

Congratulations on re-accreditation! It is particularly notable that this achievement occurred in 2021 when programs were still recovering from the pandemic.

Recommendation #1

Continue the good work on assessment but differentiate the SLOs specific to each emphasis within the major.

Recommendation #1 Overall Evaluation (please select your choice).

Good Progress	4
Making Progress	0
Little/No Progress	0

Comments related to recommendation #1.

Assessment is reported as "continued as before" and due to accreditation, differentiating the SLOs was determined to not be needed or done.

The program explains that following through on this recommendation would risk either putting them afoul of the recommendations of their accrediting body AND/OR would add a significant and likely unsustainable assessment burden for the program.

The program explained the reason behind the current number of SLOs. I agree with the program's assessment that requesting separate sets of SLOs by emphasis is not necessary.

The program has determined that it is not useful for it to create and assess additional SLOs for the two emphasis options: Construction Safety and Environmental Management. Because the overall Occupational Safety program is accredited by ABET, it does need to follow the reporting requirements for that organization. It is also important to note that the differences among the three emphases are very slight. In fact, in the main/general emphasis, students could take courses from the other two emphases as part of their elective choices. This would make it difficult to appropriately separate SLOs and measurements when it would not always be clear as to which students have a specialty in what area.

Recommendation #2

Develop a robust strategic planning process to address the following related to growth of the program: a. timeline of strategic planning activities b. work with the College to ensure adequate staffing as program grows c. development of online options d. development of risk management and loss control emphasis

Recommendation #2 Overall Evaluation (please select your choice).

Good Progress	0
Making Progress	4
Little/No Progress	0

Comments related to recommendation #2

COVID has created enrollment issues. The program has not grown in enrollment. This is problematic in regard to developing a strategic plan, staffing requirements and development of new emphasis. Progress has been made or work has been done with recommendation #2 but problems have become apparent in the past few years.

Between the pandemic, budget issues, and resignation of faculty members the program has faced significant external headwinds in addressing these recommendations. Given those headwinds the program is on the right track, and their development of online programs (2.c.) is an area of strength. The program would likely benefit from making a conscious transition away from tactical/crisis response mode to a more global/strategic mindset, but crises tend to impose more immediate demands.

The self-study describes the challenges and events that have occurred within the ongoing strategic planning process for the program. A more visual timeline would have been helpful, but the components are all described. The program has been strongly impacted by the departure of two high-level expert faculty members but is working hard to rebuild its instructional resources. Only one of the two vacancies has been approved for replacement, due to current student enrollment and cost-consciousness. My concern with this decision is that the program is close to finalizing two articulation agreements (Blackhawk Tech and the CC of the Air Force) and has begun working on another agreement with Cuyamaca College in California. If these agreements are successful, will the program have enough instructional bandwidth to serve the students? Given its movement into the online space, along with potential enrollment increases from the articulation agreements, it is wise that the program has paused the development of another emphasis.

Recommendation #3

Continue working with the campus and College to complete the implementation of the OESH laboratory in the Community Engagement Center.

Recommendation #3 Overall Evaluation (please select your choice).

Good Progress	2
Making Progress	2
Little/No Progress	0

Comments related to recommendation #3

The OESH lab is still being developed.

Given that progress toward addressing this recommendation is almost entirely contingent on factors outside of the program's control, they are making good progress toward utilizing the space in the CEC. Whether this space is likely to reach a point where it can adequately address the program's needs is an important question to consider, though the sunk costs in this case are substantial.

It is unfortunate that the lab space in the CEC cannot be used to its full potential. The program is addressing the limitations and making the most of the space.

It seems that a full implementation of the OESH laboratory in the Community Engagement Center has been fraught with a number of challenges. It is great that classes and labs are now being offered there regularly, but the

issues with the roof portion seem to be slowed. Where does the program stand on its use? What does the program most need to ensure that it has the type of lab space needed for its courses?

If the program included additional information/remarks at the end of the short self-study, please add any comments you have on this additional information. (Note: Programs are not required to include additional information/remarks.)

The program continues to measure the quality and outcomes of its students, which is what it should do. In addition, it is putting resources toward building enrollment in the program.

Recommended actions: Please make sure recommended actions are clearly stated so the program will know what is expected.

- 1) Continue to develop the strategic plan focusing on a timeline of program activities to meet program goals, and increasing/maintaining instructional staff.
- 2) Work with the campus and College to complete the implementation of the OESH laboratory in the Community Engagement Center. This should include assessing the likelihood of the CEC space reaching the point where it is adequate to the needs of the program.
- 3) Assess the extent to which the program has the resources (instructional, lab) needed to continue the development of high-quality graduates. If enrollment increases because of the articulation agreements, it may be necessary to fill the second vacated faculty position.

Should the program be required to submit a progress report before their next full self-study?

Yes, the program should submit a progress report by [insert due date].	0
No, a progress report is not needed.	4

Additional comments:

One thing that was not required as part of the short self-study was a discussion of the labor market in the Occupational Safety area. This is a career area that continues to have more openings than new graduates available. Prospective students don't seem to have a good understanding of what the program and career entail. It is hoped that the increased marketing of the program will build greater familiarity with the field.

Recommended Result:

Continuation without qualification. <i>Next self-study will be a shortened one focusing on the Recommended Actions from the current report.</i>	0
Continuation with minor concerns. <i>Progress report may be required, at the discretion of the Audit & Review Committee. *No progress report required</i>	4
Continuation with major concerns in one or more of the four areas. Submit progress report(s) addressing the concerns as directed by the Audit & Review Committee. Progress reports must be submitted to the College Dean, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Audit & Review Committee.	0
Insufficient information in the self-study to decide; revise and resubmit.	0
Refer to Provost for Action.	0