THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: Board of Regent's Policy (§6.05B) requires that each Regent university review each academic program once every seven years to help ensure that the program being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality and consistent with the institution’s mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the teaching and learning processes, and on the collection and utilization of student outcomes assessment results for programmatic improvement.

1. Institution University of Northern Iowa

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: Bachelors of Arts in Family Services and Family Studies minor

2b. List date(s) of program review: April 18, 19, 2011

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes X No

3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: 2

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes ______ No X

4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes ______ No X

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? Yes ______ No

6b. If not, why not?

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

1. External review (pg 2): Maintain status as a Certified Family Life Education Program. In doing so, make efforts to better facilitate students’ abilities to learn of this asset earlier in their course of study.

We plan to continue to maintain the CFLE program status. We plan to continue to integrate information about the CFLE program into foundational classes in the major and to broaden awareness about the CFLE program within the college and across the campus. The use of print and electronic outlets for dissemination of information about the CFLE program is being explored and/or utilized. In addition, promotional efforts that are being developed by NCFR for CFLE approved programs will be utilized as materials become available for programs to use to enhance the visibility of the CFLE program on campuses.

2. External review (pg 3): With regard to the Student Outcome Assessment Plan, consider undertaking the following:
   a. Incorporate at least one means of formative assessment, rather than solely using summative methods
   b. Employ some less traditional measures to assess student learning outcomes. For example focus groups and exit interviews
c. Report outcome assessment data a bit more clearly. For example, identify how many students or alumni have participated as respondents to a particular survey.

d. Once findings are compiled and reported, more clearly demonstrate what actions need to be and, then, are subsequently taken in response.

The faculty concurs on the importance of continuing to look at ways to improve the SOA plan. Students most often declare the major late in their plan of work at the University (e.g., having completed all Liberal Arts Core courses). This creates a context in which they move through the major in a relatively short period of time. Given this context, discussions have begun on ways to improve the SOA plan that will provide useful data in a timely manner that does not place undue burden on faculty and student time. The use of timely focus groups and electronic surveys are modalities being explored at this time. Future program reports will seek to more clearly articulate outcome assessment data and actions that will be taken in response to the data. Additional methods of disseminating this information to key stakeholders will be explored as well.

3. External review (pg 3): Find one or more courses or other contexts where students can practice and refine their presentation and, particularly, promotional and resource material (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, booklets, fliers, web pages...) development skills. Students expressed need for more practice in planning for audiences with lesser reading skills.

The senior “capstone” course in the major *Family Life Education* has incorporated the reviewers’ suggestions by placing a greater emphasis on the identified issues than previous semesters. Further enhancement of the skills will occur with some of the curriculum changes that will be forthcoming in the next academic year. Specifically the Parenting course and the Families, Alzheimer’s, & Related Dementias course will be moved into the Professional Applications grouping for the major. Courses in this grouping have a stronger applied focus then other courses and thus offer additional opportunities for students to develop these and other related skills.

4. External review (pg 3): Oversize classes likely serve as a barrier to incorporating many meaningful teaching-learning activities. Seek to reduce class sizes. One means of accomplishing this is to add one or more faculty lines for these programs.

The program faculty concurs with reviewers’ concerns about class sizes and the need for additional faculty lines. Faculty have engaged in ongoing efforts to offer classes in a timely manner so that students have not incurred delays in their plan of study and graduation. These efforts have included larger class sizes than desired and contrary to best practice—often resulting in additional work on the part of the faculty to maintain quality instruction and learning opportunities for students. Efforts have also included taking on Independent studies with students to facilitate movement through their program of study. Such efforts should be viewed however as short term solutions to the ongoing challenge of limited resources. Current economic conditions facing the state and the University suggest that following this recommendation will be slow and challenging.

5. External review (pg 3): Faculty should continue to be encouraged, as well as rewarded, for being visible on campus as a result of their leadership and service on important committees and task groups

Acknowledging and supporting the leadership and service that program faculty undertake both on campus and off campus has occurred—albeit on a more informal basis. Efforts will be undertaken to raise the profile of this service through campus and off campus mediums.

6. External review (pg 4): Devise new and novel ways to market and publicize the programs to campus audiences. For example:
- Modernize the website for the programs
- Develop and utilize a logo that complements existing UNI branding efforts.

7. **External review (pg 5):** Devise and implement new means of marketing and publicizing the programs and the profession. Forge even stronger, more compelling relationships with units on campus that can help accomplish this goal (e.g., marketing, media, admissions, recruitment, alumni relations ...).
   - Improve program web pages and linkages with UNI Admissions web pages.
   - Consider a “business/organization” Facebook page for the program.

The Family Services website has recently been modernized as the reviewers suggested, and efforts are underway to develop a branding of the Family Services program that can be integrated into campus efforts occurring at the College and University levels. Concurrent with these efforts will be the development of promotional materials that can be utilized to increase the visibility of the Family Services program, career options, and the Certified Family Life Educator program to stakeholders and potential stakeholders. The development of a Facebook page and/or the utilization of other social media forums for increasing the visibility of the program and to disseminate program information is appealing given the increasing presence of these forums for communication. The development and maintenance of these will be examined for feasibility given very limited faculty and program resources.

8. **External review (pg 5):** Improve recruitment efforts directed at high schools and community colleges in an effort to enroll more students in the program earlier in their academic pursuits. One possible means could be utilizing enrolled students as program ambassadors who return to the high schools and community colleges from which they originated to champion the “family realm” as field of study/profession and, in particular, the Family Services major and Family Studies minor programs at NIU.

Program faculty concur with the reviewers suggestions that recruiting students earlier in their program of study is important as well as recruiting at high schools for the Family Services program. Following this recommendation for increasing these students understanding of the major and career options available through Family Services will be a long term strategy of the program. Forthcoming promotional materials to be developed first can then be utilized to reach these targeted audiences and can be utilized by current students in talking with other students on campus and at their high schools.

9. **External review (pg 5):** Without putting colleagues in competing fields (e.g., psychology, sociology, counseling, social work) on defensive, especially those within the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, devise ways to illustrate the distinctive contributions family services graduates can make as employees in a multitude of settings.

Program faculty believe that efforts associated with other recommendations the reviewers have made to increase the visibility of the program to campus and community stakeholders, as well as raising the visibility of program faculty’s leadership and service will speak to this specific recommendation. In addition, highlighting alumni’s contributions through established channels of communication (e.g. college newsletter); as well as through the revised website could raise awareness of the contributions of the family services graduates.

10. **External review (pg 5):** Until the number of incoming freshmen enrolled in the major and minor increases, take steps to ensure an adequate number of sections of 31F: 010 Human Identity and Relationships can be offered each semester as this appears to be a gateway course to the major and minor. Two other courses, Family Relationships and Human Relationships and Sexuality, similarly serve as conduits to the major and minor as well.
The Human Identify and Relationships, Family Relationships and Human Relationships and Sexuality courses are recognized and valued for their role in introducing and recruiting students to the Family Services program. Limited resources that become available to the program area for offering additional courses are directed primarily to these courses. Class enrollments have been adjusted at times to increase opportunities for incoming freshmen to step into these courses. Because these classes are popular on campus and the fact the Human Identity and Relationships class also serves a course in the Liberal Arts Core, keeping sections open only for freshmen can be challenging. Nonetheless efforts will continue to be undertaken to accomplish this recommendation.

11. External review (pg 7): As soon as is economically feasible, add at least one, preferably two, faculty lines. Some portion of the line(s) could be shared with the Gerontology major and minor.

12. External review (pg 7): Continue to make a clear and solid case for at least one, preferably two, additional faculty lines. In tandem, pursue external funding from grants and donations.

The reviewers report indicate that diminishing faculty resources has had an impact on the Family Services program as a whole in several ways. One such way is that the School of Applied Human Sciences and the Family Services program is one of the most efficient academic units in the college. Such efficiency has come at a cost to faculty in terms of overload and to the learning environments for students. The program faculty concur with the suggestion that one or preferably two faculty lines be added—with the possibility of a line being shared with the Gerontology major and minor. It is the belief of the faculty that such lines would further enhance the quality of the Family Services major and Family Studies minor as well as the professional scholarly and pedagogical endeavors of the faculty who serve the program. While the allocation of resources for these lines is outside the control of program faculty, advocating for such lines will continue to be a focus of the program faculty. Recognition, support and advocacy for such lines is occurring by the School of Applied Human Sciences Director Dr. Howard Barnes. Although the need for these lines is recognized by the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Administration, the economic constraints facing the University suggest the achievement of these recommendations will be slow in coming.

13. External review (pg 7): Enhance existing collaborations and forge new ones with those listed below. The result could potentially be innovative ideas, new approaches, more students, more resources, more linkages/contacts, and greater visibility.

- Fellow colleagues in the School of Applied Human Sciences, particularly those from Counseling and Gerontology
- Fellow colleagues in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, particularly those from Social Work, Sociology, and Psychology
- UNI staff in units that focus on recruitment, admissions, research and sponsored programs, university advancement/friend raising and fund raising
- High schools, community colleges, alumni, employers, internship supervisors, current and potential donors, legislators and so on.

The interdisciplinary nature of the Family Services program lends itself well to collaborative work. Program faculty have, and will continue, to explore and develop opportunities for collaboration both on campus and with community partners and stakeholders. To date such efforts have focused primarily around scholarly endeavors; through programmatic work in the community by faculty; and working with community partners where interns are placed. Although efforts have recently been initiated, increasing collaborative work with other UNI units that focus on recruitment, admissions, and fund raising will be enhanced in the coming years.
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1. Institution __University of Northern Iowa______________________________

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: _Gerontology: undergraduate_____________________

2b. List date(s) of program review: __2010-2011________________________________________

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes __X____ No _____

3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: __2

(Note: Two evaluators were “shared” by Gerontology and Family Studies.)

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes _____ No __X____

4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes __X____ No _____

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? Yes __X____ No _____

6b. If not, why not?

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

Recommendations from external reviewers and SOAs are listed below with responses.

1. External review (pg. 3): The Gerontology Advisory Board should include members from the local or state Council on Aging. Consideration should be given to include health care and well-being representatives from the private sector. Formal written guidelines explaining the board’s purpose, goals, and structure should be developed.

Donna Harvey (director of the Iowa Department on Aging) and Mike Isaacson (director of Hawkeye Valley Area on Aging) have joined the Gerontology Advisory Board in fall of 2011. We believe their input will be extremely valuable because they are well-known assets to our local and state community of aging professionals. We are currently in discussions to establish a meeting schedule for the board that will maximize the benefit of both on campus and off campus members. We are considering having two “sub committees:” 1) faculty on
campus who teach and contribute to Gerontology, and 2) off campus professionals in aging and alumni who link with our program. In order to add more structure and purpose, we plan to write a short document explaining the board’s goals that will be available on our website along with a list of Gerontology Advisory Board members.

2. External review (pg. 3): Consider updating the Gerontology program web-site to reflect any curriculum changes due to reorganization. Improve web links between other programs, the school, college and university.

The website underwent a very extensive update in summer of 2011. It is not only linked to other areas at UNI but also to community agencies and volunteer opportunities. We believe the website is now a helpful resource for current and potential students.

3. External review (pg. 4): Consider using various community marketing facilities and outlets. These might include sending electronic or paper newsletters to alumni and community leaders; encourage faculty to register as guest speakers within community directories; create a gerontology program press release form announcing news about awards, grants, and program activities to local radio, television and print media outlets.

We have created an electronic newsletter that will be emailed to current students, alumni, community members, and interested individuals on campus. This newsletter will be published once a semester and will also be available on our website. The first issue was published in September of 2010. Furthermore, Dr. Eshbaugh is a frequent guest speaker in the community. This fall (2011), UNI Gerontology coordinated the Gerontology & Grief Presentation series with the support of Iowa Hospice. This was advertised both on and off campus. We will continue to seek opportunities to be present in the press and use UNI’s public relations services. This is certainly a priority in our program.

4. External review (pg. 4): Consider encouraging current students and alumni to act as ambassadors to high schools, community colleges, and regional career day events. Consider establishing an alumni organization or networking service to host recruitment events. Utilize university sources and offices such as Academic Achievement & Retention Services, Academic Advising for Non-declared Majors, Student Admission Ambassadors, UNI Broadcasting Service, and the University Relations Offices of Marketing, Public/Media Services and UNI On-Line. Consider participating in the Social Media @ UNI which sponsors outlets to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.

We are currently in the process of using our current students and key alumni to produce a video focusing on careers in aging. This video will be available on our website and also sent to Academic Advising as a resource. We plan to post it on YouTube, as well. In addition, we participate in Majors in Minutes every fall to recruit new majors. We have had a Facebook page for some time, and we recently started using Twitter. We have registered this with Social Media @UNI. We continually look for ways to make UNI Gerontology well-known on campus and in the community.

5. External review (pg. 5): Consider forming a consortium of Iowa universities, including UNI that could jointly offer a degree program. While visiting UNI, we became aware that there is an attempt in progress to establish a consortium of Iowa universities for foreign languages. It might serve as a model for gerontology.

There is currently an Iowa Consortium of Aging Programs. We participate along with DMACC, Iowa State, and Iowa. We have been in discussions about how to cross-list courses for students. Because DMACC’s emphasis is at the community college level and Iowa and ISU focus on graduate work, it is unlikely that we will offer a joint degree program. However, we seek to maximize our resources by working together. For instance, each fall we coordinate a Gerontology Colloquia Series for students. In addition, we meet once a semester to discuss how to
best work together to create opportunities for students and benefit Iowa’s aging population. The UNI Gerontology Program does have a detailed articulation agreement with DMACC.

6. External review (pg. 3): Report outcome assessment data a bit more clearly. For example, identify how many students or alumni have participated as respondents to a particular survey. Once findings are compiled and reported, more clearly demonstrate what actions need to be taken.

We have put much effort into revising our SOA’s. Future emphasis will be placed on writing more detail-oriented reports in a way that it is more useful, especially to individuals outside of the program.

7. SOA report: Based on our SOAs, we recommended consideration of assignments and activities in Gerontology courses that focus on current research and its application. This was discussed with the Gerontology Advisory Board. Instructors who teach Gerontology courses and are involved with the Gerontology Advisory Board are aware of this recommendation. ALL instructors who have taught the Gerontology core courses recently are now focusing on applying research and empirical knowledge in their courses.

Many comments from the external reviewers point to the lack of resources and need for another faculty member in Gerontology. Obviously, this is not in our control. We hope that when economic trends change more resources will be invested in Gerontology. Due to demographics changes in society (discussed in the APR self-study and by the external reviewers), we believe this program has great potential for expansion. Furthermore, it remains the only undergraduate Gerontology degree in the state of Iowa. Careers in gerontology are among the fastest growing careers across Iowa and the nation, and our Gerontology program is on the cutting edge of this opportunity. UNI has a tremendous opportunity to invest in this program.
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1. Institution: University of Northern Iowa
2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: Bachelor of Arts in Interior Design
2b. List date(s) of program review: April 7, 2011
3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes X No _____
3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: 2
4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes _____ No X
4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.
5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes _____ No X
6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? Yes _____ No _____ 6b. If not, why not? Not applicable
7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.
Priorities and plans for the Interior Design program are as follows:
1. Strengthen the curriculum
   • attend CIDA workshop to determine curriculum refinements
   • improve SOA benchmark assessments and analysis for better feedback loops
   • train faculty in latest software
   • support faculty licensure goals
2. Strengthen and diversify faculty
   • start a dialog across campus about contact hour recognition to balance faculty loads
   • revise promotion and tenure criteria to include diverse forms of scholarship
   • train faculty in latest software
   • support faculty licensure goals
   • seek additional faculty resources
3. Enhance program resources
   • explore space availability for student project archives needed for program accreditation.
   • continue to update design software
   • continue to communicate library needs
THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: Board of Regent's Policy (§6.05B) requires that each Regent university review each academic program once every seven years to help ensure that the program being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality and consistent with the institution's mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the teaching and learning processes, and on the collection and utilization of student outcomes assessment results for programmatic improvement.

1. Institution University of Northern Iowa

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: Textiles and Apparel Major and Minor

2b. List date(s) of program review: April 21-22, 2011

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes X No

3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: 2

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes No X

4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.
N/A

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes No X

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? Yes No

6b. If not, why not?
N/A

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

Response to Specific Recommendations

1. Increase Student Enrollment

   a. Enrollment Recommendation: Work with Admissions to inform staff of program content and activities.

   Response: The TAPP program currently works closely with the UNI Admissions Office. For example last spring currently enrolled TAPP students work with TAPP faculty to put on a program for visiting high school students as a part of Panther Peek Visit Days programming. We also regularly meet with visiting students and their parents. Homecoming weekend we had two sets of parents and visiting students visit a class that included alumni speaking about their current jobs as designers and product development specialists working at Target and Christopher and Banks in Minneapolis.
b. **Enrollment Recommendation:** Visit high schools and participate in high school and community college career days.

**Response:** In the recent past the students in the Textiles and Apparel Association have made a point of visiting their high schools to talk about the program during their holiday breaks. The one week Thanksgiving break now given to students at UNI is a good opportunity for students to go back to their alma maters, as typically high schools remain in session for the first couple days of Thanksgiving week. The current plan is have students use both the current web site and the program CD (see h below) to personally promote the program in their home town school system.

c. **Enrollment Recommendation:** Participate in UNI Up Close fair and other UNI recruitment efforts.

**Response:** The TAPP program will continue to work with the director to ensure our presence at these events. As indicated in the response to earlier recommendation opening this section, we have actively participated in these events in the past.

d. **Enrollment Recommendation:** Explore articulation agreements with community colleges in order to recruit community college students.

**Response:** TAPP faculty have decided to focus first on drafting an articulation agreement with Central Campus High School, an innovative magnet high school in Des Moines with an apparel design program very closely aligned with our program focus in product development. We have contacted the faculty member charged with running and delivering the program and plan to visit this fall to begin this process. This program is currently working with Des Moines Area Community College to offer college credits for some of their upper level offerings. We would like to craft a similar agreement, and also stretch to work more closely with DMACC.

e. **Enrollment Recommendation:** Increase awareness within the UNI student community of TAPP program and careers.

**Response:** In response to this recommendation, the TAPP program faculty created a very visible Homecoming event this past fall that included a Friday visit of alumni from Minneapolis, coupled with a Project Runway style fashion show event held as a part of the Panther Homecoming Festival on Saturday. President Allen’s wife and visiting alumni judged designs created in a two week period by UNI students using vintage Panther uniforms donated by the Athletic Department to the program.

In addition to this new tradition, the program plans to more effectively use our well attended annual design show to showcase alumni working in the industry to the packed audience at Lang Hall Auditorium. While ideas are still underway, our Director of Development within our college has committed to helping us set up a networking reception for alumni, current students, and interested students after the show this spring. We also have discussed the possibility of having a limited of number of alumni designs on the runway to showcase what our students are capable of doing once they graduate from the program.

f. **Enrollment Recommendation:** Consider conducting Fashion Camp for high school students in summer; pattern after Sports camp.

**Response:** The faculty has considered offering a basic construction course as a continuing education course during May term to high school students and others interested in learning basic sewing skills. This could potentially attract students to the program. This idea is still under consideration, and will perhaps be offered by the program beginning in spring 2012. Our sister program within the school, Interior Design, has offered camps for the last two years with limited success in terms of attracting significant numbers of students. This fact influences our decision to move in this direction. We have, however, received requests for a sewing fundamentals class over
the years and perhaps this could be a way to introduce local students to the program through a pre-college experience.

g. **Enrollment Recommendation:** Prepare program CD for distribution to high school guidance counselors and to distribute at career events.

*Response:* The TAPP faculty has discussed this idea with our director, and we plan to implement this year.

h. **Enrollment Recommendation:** Continue exploring the use of social media to promote the program.

*Response:* The TAPP program was the first academic program on campus to use the "UNI I Am" marketing campaign to create a Facebook page for promotional purposes. Our Facebook page includes posting of international and national fashion events, but program news and events, and profiles of alumni. The page has proved to be an effective tool for attracting students both on campus, but also a means of making a significant connection to students considering applying for admission to the program both as high school and transfer students from community colleges and/or other universities.

### 2: Proposed Modifications to Curriculum

a. **Curriculum Recommendation:** Consider creatively using existing courses to promote a retailing merchandising career path.

*Response:* The already existing minor in Textiles and Apparel already equips a student who wants to pursue a career path in retail merchandising within the stores environment. An informal survey of TAPP alumni placed in product development with top national brands strongly reinforced the program’s commitment to giving all graduates of the program a strong product development background in order to ensure corporate level placements and entry into strong career paths. The early decision not to follow the discipline trend in graduating a majority of students to fill retail stores positions is felt to be sound by the current faculty. While we certainly support our minors, we also encourage the stronger students with true interest in careers in the textiles and apparel field to commit to the much more technical and demanding major requirements of our program.

b. **Curriculum Recommendation:** Reconsider whether following ITAA program goals is consistent with UNI TAPP Program Goals.

*Response:* The program has decided to focus on program specific goals linked to our highly technical curriculum and acquisition of product development skills.

c. **Curriculum Recommendation:** Consider offering internship course to the students the summer of their junior year rather their senior year to accommodate industry requirements.

*Response:* The program already both offers and promotes this option, as some companies, such as Target, will only accept interns who return to campus for at least one semester.

d. **Curriculum Recommendation:** Consider more emphasis on professional preparation and portfolio development and less content on fashion show in professional development course.

*Response:* Fashion show production has been moved out of this course into a separate specially offered problems course.
3. Faculty Load Recommendation

   a. **Faculty Load Recommendation:** Reconsider how faculty loads are determined in terms of lab and lecture courses.

   **Response:** The TAPP faculty supports adoption of faculty load assignments as determined within the sciences at UNI, with faculty assigned to labs received decreased course loads based on contact hours. Given the strong technical and science core of our program we are closely aligned with programs from that college, therefore argue that our course assignments reflect the hands on science and technology base of our program.

4. Facility and Equipment Recommendations

   a. **Facility and Equipment Recommendation:** Replace chairs in apparel production laboratory with adjustable height stools.

      **Response:** Chairs replaced in summer 2011.

   b. **Facility and Equipment Recommendation:** Modify tables for ergonomic advantage.

      **Response:** Tables modified in summer/fall 2011.

   c. **Facility and Equipment Recommendation:** Consider re-surfacing tables for appropriate use.

      **Response:** Current cork top tables are meeting apparel construction needs, and it was decided not to resurface.

   d. **Facility and Equipment Recommendation:** Consider moveable furniture in multi-use laboratory.

      **Response:** 7 large stationary tables replaced in summer 2011 with 14 smaller portable tables that can be flexibly arranged for a range of purposes.

   e. **Facility and Equipment Recommendation:** Improve student access to CAD laboratory.

      **Response:** To the extent possible, open lab hours have been extended within our one computer lab. With the emphasis on student recruiting the faculty voices concern within this report regarding the lack of a back-up second CAD lab space for teaching possible additional sections of our computer aided designs courses. We request that the administration reconsider the decision not to equip the Sabin Hall computer lab with equipment able to handle running our very memory intensive visual software.
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1. Institution: University of Northern Iowa

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: Professional Science Master’s in Applied Physics

2b. List date(s) of program review: March 29-31, 2011

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes ______ No _____

3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: _____

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes ______ No ______

4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

   The program admitted its first students in fall 2006. The program started with four students and had increased to 9 students within two years. The long-term trend is between 10 and 15 students in process per year.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes ______ No _____

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? Yes ______ No _____

6b. If not, why not?

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

   Recommendations:
   1. Since the program is still developing, develop a plan to manage growth.
   2. The institution should increase the number of graduate assistantships.
   3. The program has 20 PSM Applied Physics graduates in its first four years of operation, with most employed in Iowa’s high tech industries (John Deere, Rockwell Collins, DISTech Integration…). The program should plan to increase its connections to these industries.
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1. Institution ____________________________

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: ____________________________
2b. List date(s) of program review: ____________________________

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes ______ No _____
3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: _____

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes ______ No ______
4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes ______ No ______

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? Yes ______ No ______
6b. If not, why not?

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

Conclusions:
1. Dedicated faculty clearly interested in undergraduate instruction.
2. Well-executed renovation of Begeman Hall, the location of UNI Physics.
3. Strong leadership of the department chair person.
4. Good student space to support the program.
5. Good support of undergraduate research.
6. "Yeoman service" to students majoring in biology and chemistry in providing pre-med and pre-health sciences physics courses.
7. The program provides a very important service to the State of Iowa through the state’s largest program of training future high school physics teachers.
9. Strong support from program alumni in sponsoring an undergraduate robotics initiative.
10. Strong support to Iowa high schools in hosting AEA 267 and the State of Iowa Physics Olympics.

Recommendations:
1. Support for program plan to increase retention and matriculation of physics majors. The current enrollment of 75 students is “quite respectable for a program this size.”
2. Consider how part-time service personnel might help maintain equipment.
3. Support the undergraduates in increasing Society of Physics Students activities. This will help retention.
4. Review program data and consider how the newest physics faculty hire (a woman) might help undergraduate recruitment and retention.
5. The program “takes student assessment seriously.” Continue the strong student outcomes assessment efforts.
THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: Board of Regent's Policy (§6.05B) requires that each Regent university review each academic program once every seven years to help ensure that the program being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality and consistent with the institution’s mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the teaching and learning processes, and on the collection and utilization of student outcomes assessment results for programmatic improvement.

1. Institution __University of Northern Iowa________

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: _Biology Undergraduate Program_
2b. List date(s) of program review: _April 14 & 15, 2011_

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators?  Yes __X___ No _____
3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: __2__

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years?  
   Yes __X____  No ______
4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

   In 2008, undergraduate enrollments in the Department of Biology totaled 482 students. In 2010, the total number of undergraduate students enrolled in the Department of Biology was 697. This likely typifies an increase in the opportunities available in biological disciplines such as medically related fields, biotechnology related areas, and students wishing to pursue advanced degrees in biological fields.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval?  
   Yes ____  No __X__

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents?  
   Yes ____  No ____
6b. If not, why not?

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.
1. Develop a shared vision for the Department

The Department of Biology agrees with this suggestion and the Faculty Retreat held August 19, 2011 was dedicated to shoring up our vision for the Department. As a Department, we wish to be the premier Biology program in the state. We will continue to be a Department that exposes students to a broad array of biological concepts and ideas, while also giving students the opportunity to study these concepts in more depth and detail. Our primary role is the education of our students and we feel that undergraduate research and our graduate program build on the quality of education we offer students in the teaching classroom. We wish to provide faculty with time and funding to continue to be creative in both teaching and research.

2. Redistribution of resources provided by administration based on a formula that includes per capita student population.

The Department of Biology has grown substantially over the past seven years (see table below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biology Majors</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF MAJORS</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>697</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Dr. Haack, Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Sciences has pointed out, the Department of Biology has more students than all the other science departments combined (Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth Science, and Physics) but has a smaller budget than the combined budget of the afore mentioned programs. As such, students majoring in Biology are at a disadvantage in terms of per student spending relative to other science departments on campus. We fully understand the need to have strong programs in other disciplines associated with our University and would not want to see a decline in these programs. Yet, we believe our students should be provided the same opportunities as those departments that have greater budget to student ratios.

We believe that the redistribution of resources would also benefit the Department in better meeting the goals and objectives of the University of Northern Iowa strategic plan, particularly:

- G1.O1.S1 (Identify, support, and promote undergraduate programs that raise the profile of the institution)
- G1.O1.S4 (Mentor undergraduate students to conduct research and compete for national scholarships and fellowships)
- G1.O2.S2 (Provide broad-based education that inspires critical thinking, creativity, openness to new ideas, and student responsibility for their learning)
- G2.O2.S3 (Recruit, develop, and retain faculty distinguished by their creative and intellectually rigorous teaching and scholarship)

3. Improve access to undergraduate research opportunities.

As a department, we would like to provide more access to students for research opportunities but the reviewers offered no guidance on how this might be accomplished. Currently, most faculty involve undergraduate students in their research programs. However, the number of students that can be overseen and provided with a positive research experience is limited from
2 to 4 students, depending on the type of research project. Potentially, more students could be involved in undergraduate research in the summer undergraduate research program, but this would require additional funding of stipends so that more students could participate. We know that students are really very interested to participate in undergraduate research and that the students have more focused time over the summer as evidenced by the large number of applications submitted for this summer research program. Currently, we cannot give more students opportunities for this summer research experience since there are no funds to support more of them.

Several years ago, the Department had funds from Financial Aid that allowed students to participate in research and receive a stipend to do so. This “Career Scholars Program” has since then disappeared. The resurrection of this program, or one like it, would allow for the funding of students to work in the research setting and would assist us in better meeting strategic plan goal G1.O1.S4 (Mentor undergraduate students to conduct research and compete for national scholarships and fellowships).

4. Systematically organize funds such that year end purchases could be planned and prioritized (generation of an equipment fund)

Department of Biology’s Response

The Department has fared well under the distribution of end-of-year funds and we are appreciative of the support we have received. These end-of-year funds support equipment purchases for teaching and research. However, the process of spending end-of-year funds often does not lead to the purchase of the most highly prioritized equipment. With end-of-year purchases we are required to make purchases that can be delivered by a late June deadline. Even though we develop a list of needed equipment at the beginning of the academic year, we often are not aware of end-of-year funds until after the end of the school year, thereby leaving us little time for delivery of equipment and supplies. As such, we must reprioritize our purchases such that we can have them delivered in this short amount of time. If we knew that there were funds available much earlier, we could arrange to purchase equipment and items in a more dedicated fashion.

Additionally, knowing that funds would be available for equipment purchase would aid in making decisions regarding how to use our Department Supplies and Services budget. If we knew that there would be funding for the purchase of equipment, then use of our S&S budget could be directed toward providing supplies that would allow faculty to pursue additional activities in teaching and research as well as providing additional opportunities for our students.

By setting up an equipment fund, the Department could better meet the following goals of the strategic plan:

G1.O1.S1 (Identify, support, and promote undergraduate programs that raise the profile of the institution)
G1.O1.S4 (Mentor undergraduate students to conduct research and compete for national scholarships and fellowships)
G2.O1.S1 (Recognize and support high-quality graduate programs that prepare leaders in their professions and enhance the social, cultural, and economic development of Iowa)
G2.O2.S3 (Recruit, develop, and retain faculty distinguished by their creative and intellectually rigorous teaching and scholarship)

5. Reduce degree options (emphases).

Department of Biology’s Response

The majority of the Department feel that we do not offer too many emphases and that the offering of these emphases distinguish our Department from other Biology programs. We also
feel that students like having choices of emphases for pursuit of courses that best fit their goals. Our new Academic Advisor, Joan Smothers, is working to determine the value that students, faculty, potential employers, and graduate/professional programs place on our using the various emphases currently in place.

Maintaining our current emphases may assist us in meeting the strategic plan goal G1.O2.S2 (Provide broad-based education that inspires critical thinking, creativity, openness to new ideas, and student responsibility for their learning).

6. Course offerings are numerous and appear duplicative.

Department of Biology’s Response

The majority of the Department feel that we do not offer too many courses and that these offering are not duplicative. We have nearly 700 majors in Biology, and these students have a variety of interests in Biology. Our curriculum provides opportunities for students to explore these interests. All of our students are required to take four common courses during their freshman and sophomore years, providing a broad overview to the biological discipline. Yet, we believe that what separates us from many of the smaller liberal institutions in Iowa is our ability to offer a variety of courses taught by experts in the field. All of our courses have had enrollments that meet the minimum requirements set forth by the University. Additionally, many of our courses are limited to the number of students due to physical limitations of laboratory size and the need for faculty to interact with manageable numbers of students in the field and laboratory.

Maintaining our current number of courses assist us in meeting G1.O2.S2 (Provide broad-based education that inspires critical thinking, creativity, openness to new ideas, and student responsibility for their learning) and G6.O3.S1 (Increase four-year graduation rates) of the strategic plan.

7. Maintain the current model for student academic advising

Department of Biology’s Response

The Department agrees with this suggestion and in fact with the help of Dr. Haack, we have improved on this model through making the Academic Advisor position a full-time position with increased duties including tracking of students and assisting with the recruitment and retention of students. This model assist students in having access to advising and benefits faculty in providing additional time to work with students in the teaching classrooms and laboratories as well as working with students in the research setting. Additionally, the new Academic Advisor, Joan Smothers, will work with community colleges to better communicate to them those courses that would best serve potential transfer students as well as the sequencing of these courses to reduce the student’s time to graduation.

Maintaining our current model of academic advising assists us in better meeting G6.O2.S3 (Strengthen relationships with community colleges to improve transfer students’ transition process) and G6.O3.S1 (Increase four-year graduation rates) of the strategic plan.

8. Better tracking of students and their successes (publications and presentations)

Department of Biology’s Response

We agree with the reviewers’ comments about better tracking of our students. Part of the role of the new full-time Academic Advisor will be to monitor our students’ successes and keep better track of where our students go. Doing so will assist us in continuing to make the case that we are meeting the following goals of the strategic plan.
G1.O1.S1 (Identify, support, and promote undergraduate programs that raise the profile of the institution)
G1.O1.S4 (Mentor undergraduate students to conduct research and compete for national scholarships and fellowships)
G1.O2.S2 (Provide broad-based education that inspires critical thinking, creativity, openness to new ideas, and student responsibility for their learning)

9. Consolidation of courses to free up faculty time to work with undergraduates

Department of Biology's Response

The Department lacks a clear majority on the agreement of this suggestion from our reviewers. First, the reviewers did not provide details regarding which courses should be considered for consolidation or a method by which we could identify courses that require consolidation. Most members of the Department would like to find ways to increase time to interact with undergraduates in the research setting, but it is not our desire to do so at the expense of teaching courses. Currently, a policy does exist within the Department of Biology that allows for individual faculty to keep track of the number of undergraduate research hours they oversee. Faculty are required to submit documentation providing a description of activities engaged in by the faculty member working with the student to Ms. Sandi Ingles (Administrative Assistant) by the end of the semester in which the student was enrolled in undergraduate research. These hours must be approved by the Department Head, at which time faculty can bank the hours. Upon the accumulation of every 5 hours of undergraduate research taken for credit, the faculty member will receive 1 contact hour of course release time. In the past, this has been little used due to a lack of ability to manipulate the course schedule such that sufficient numbers of classes could be offered if release time was granted. With increased help with adjunct funding, we can now cover courses while still providing release time for 1 or 2 faculty per semester. We would appreciate continued support of this policy and the means via adjunct funding to make this happen. Further, the availability of such a policy and its implementation aids us in the recruitment and retention of faculty who wish to be involved in research with undergraduates.

Assistance in allowing the continued implementation of our existing policy for release time helps the Department better meet G1.O1.S4 (Mentor undergraduate students to conduct research and compete for national scholarships and fellowships) and G1.O3.S1 (Improve recruitment and retention strategies for faculty and increase professional development opportunities).

10. Research space is adequate.

Department of Biology's Response

The majority of the Department agree with the reviewer’s assessment of research space for the current level of faculty positions.

11. Staff provide services and support activities for faculty and students are efficient in doing so.

Department of Biology’s Response

The Department whole-heartedly agrees with this statement. We are fortunate to have capable and caring staff who meet the needs of the faculty and of our students.
THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: Board of Regent's Policy (§6.05B) requires that each Regent university review each academic program once every seven years to help ensure that the program being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality and consistent with the institution’s mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the teaching and learning processes, and on the collection and utilization of student outcomes assessment results for programmatic improvement.

1. Institution  University of Northern Iowa

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed:  Biology Graduate Program (M.S./M.A./PSM)

2b. List date(s) of program review:  April 14 & 15, 2011

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators?  Yes  X  No  

3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators:  2

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years?  Yes  

4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval?  Yes  

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents?  Yes  

6b. If not, why not?

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.
Reviewer's Suggestions (in red)

1. Better funding of the M.S. program, increasing the number of Graduate Teaching Assistantships and funding of these assistantships.

Department of Biology's Response

Much of the reviewers’ report dealt with the graduate program in Biology. We assume that this may be where the reviewers saw weaknesses, with other areas of the Department being deemed strong with little for them to suggest for improvement. We view the availability of a graduate program as a strength for our overall program. The presence of an M.S. program stimulates creativity among faculty, provides mentors for our undergraduate students in the research setting, allows greater course offerings for all students, and assists our faculty in their scholarly pursuits. In addition, the presence of the M.S. program assists in the recruitment and retention of faculty and can invigorate classroom teaching through incorporation of ideas gleaned and generated from research projects. Bringing in information generated at UNI by our own faculty into the classroom brings science to life for our students.

The Department agrees with the reviewers’ assessment of the need to better fund the M.S. program. The ability to offer higher stipends for Teaching Assistants would increase our competitiveness and allow us to attract higher caliber students. Conversely, we also recognize the need for faculty to do a better job in finding outside funding to support our graduate program. Continued support of the release time for working with undergraduate students may provide faculty time to generate grant proposals that could support both our undergraduate and graduate programs.

We would also ask the administration to continue to support the Seed Grant Competition started by the Office of Sponsored Programs. These funds assist faculty in collecting preliminary data that can be used to generate a proposal that could lead to better funding of both graduate and undergraduate students.

Increased support of the Department’s graduate program helps us to better meet G2.O1.S1 (Recognize and support high-quality graduate programs that prepare leaders in their professions and enhance the social, cultural, and economic development of Iowa) and G2.O2.S3 (Recruit, develop, and retain faculty distinguished by their creative and intellectually rigorous teaching and scholarship) of the strategic plan. Indirectly, the presence of a graduate program assist us in meeting G1.O1.S1 (Identify, support, and promote undergraduate programs that raise the profile of the institution), G1.O1.S4 (Mentor undergraduate students to conduct research and compete for national scholarships and fellowships), and G1.O2.S2 (Provide broad-based education that inspires critical thinking, creativity, openness to new ideas, and student responsibility for their learning) portions of the strategic plan.

2. Better assess the efforts of the Biology M.S. students by systematically keeping data on the number of students that apply, are accepted, attend, graduate, publish, and obtain work or positions at other institutions.

Department of Biology’s Response

We agree that doing a better job of keeping track of our students would provide us with information to better determine changes that need to occur in our M.S. program. Greater effort will take place to ensure better tracking of our graduate students.

3. Develop core courses for the graduate program providing broad exposure to interdisciplinary problems and approaches in the biological sciences.
We do not believe that we need to develop core courses to accomplish providing our M.S. students broad exposure to interdisciplinary problems and approaches in the biological sciences. We believe our students have access to this from the variety of courses currently offered in our curriculum as well as through their research experience. It is typical that Biological research requires techniques, skills, and ideas from a variety of disciplines, thus providing the students with a truly hands-on interdisciplinary approach to the biological sciences. Additionally, all graduate students must choose two of four “Advanced Topics” courses, which further broadens the student’s exposure to techniques, skills and ideas from a variety of disciplines.

4. Re-evaluate the PSM programs to explore freeing up faculty time to work with undergraduates.

We agree with this suggestion from the reviewers. To date, enrollment in these two programs has been weak, with as few as two students in the Biotechnology PSM program last year, to maximum of nine students each in the Ecosystem Management and Biotechnology PSM programs this year. Each program has a total of 12 hours per year dedicated solely to the students enrolled in the program, for a total of 24 hours per year (1.3 faculty positions) dedicated for nine to eighteen students per year. It would seem to make more sense to have students in these two programs enroll in courses that already exist for undergraduate and graduate students, thereby providing the Department the ability to offer additional courses that would potentially benefit all students or free up faculty time to interact with undergraduates in the research setting.

5. Provide no additional resources to the M.A. program, leaving it as it is now.

We agree with the reviewers’ suggestion regarding our M.A. program. This program places no additional cost or burden on the Department in regards to course offerings or expense for supplies or equipment.

6. Development of a research coordinator position to assist in submissions of external grant proposals.

The Department does not agree that this would be the best use of the University’s resources as this service already exists in the Office of Sponsored Programs.

7. Develop an intensive multi-day orientation for graduate students to occur prior to the start of the fall semester.

The Department takes this suggestion under advisement and will explore the development of such a course.

8. Develop a Departmental Graduate Admissions Committee to evaluate potential applicants.
This committee already exists and many of the suggestions provided by the reviewers on the workings of this committee are incorporated into the mechanisms by which students are evaluated for entry into our program.

9. Incorporate the GRE into the evaluation criteria for potential M.S. applicants

Department of Biology’s Response

The Department will take this suggestion under advisement. We see the potential benefit of the incorporation of the GRE in that it likely could increase the quality of student accepted into the program, however, it might also limit the number of applications received.
THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: Board of Regent's Policy (§6.05B) requires that each Regent university review each academic program once every seven years to help ensure that the program being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality and consistent with the institution’s mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the teaching and learning processes, and on the collection and utilization of student outcomes assessment results for programmatic improvement.

1. Institution University of Northern Iowa

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: Bachelor of Liberal Studies
2b. List date(s) of program review: March 24-25, 2011

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes X No
3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: 2

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes No X
4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes No X

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? N/A Yes No
6b. If not, why not? N/A

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

There were two main assessment recommendations that arose out of the 2011 Academic Program Review:

1. “Institute a required capstone for BLS students for a direct assessment of student learning outcomes that they ‘discover the value of integrating various academic disciplines,’ and ‘combine course offerings in different academic to create a unique field of study.’ The capstone currently being taught by the Coordinator of BLS would be a good course for this purpose. Both students we spoke with would welcome a required course in their respective programs. Faculty also thought this was a good idea. A schedule of course rotation would become necessary.”

2. “Institute an early, required interaction with Career Services. We were extremely impressed with the UNI’s Career Services. Students should be encouraged to take the courses Career Services offers and to make frequent trips to the offices. Direct assessments could stem from this interaction as well.”
Other recommendations included:

1. “Create an opportunity for social networking to help students get to know each other and establish a social club for students in BLS.”

2. “Reduce the amount of time allowed for a Guided Independent Study course.”

3. “Augment online course offerings.”

4. “Review Faculty Advisory Board membership every two years to ensure optimal representation.”

5. “Continue to increase the number of online courses at a rapid pace.”

6. “Create an automated advisement report in SIS for the BLS degree.”

7. “Work with Career Services and with employers to find out how well BLS students are doing after they leave UNI. Survey employers for a third party perspective.”

Conclusions resulting from the external review:

The external reviewers substantiated the conclusions of the Self-Study report and agreed that we should continue to refine and develop meaningful measurable outcomes that can be used to collect data to enhance the BLS program and improve its overall quality.

Program improvements resulting from this review:

One of the recommendations resulting from this review was to require a capstone course for BLS students. While we have not created a required course for BLS students, we have created a course, to be taught every semester, called Foundations of Interdisciplinary Studies, which was created specifically for BLS and General Studies students. This course is designed to cultivate students’ growth of interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding and provide them with an opportunity to synthesize their academic experiences. Additionally, it allows students to integrate the skills and knowledge they have learned in their previous coursework and apply that knowledge to real-world situations and problems. One of the course assignments for the foundations course requires students to connect with the Career Services Office to develop a resume/cover letter and to participate in a mock interview with a Career Services Counselor.

We also offer a Guided Independent Study course, designed expressly for BLS and General Studies students, called Studies in Career Theory and Development. This course provides BLS students with an opportunity to explore their vocational interests and career-related goals and also provides a connection to our Career Services Office. Additionally, we offer a course called Critical Thinking in a Democratic Society that was created to help students understand the individual and societal benefits of critical thinking. This course allows BLS and General Studies students to engage in purposeful reflective judgment, which is a top priority for most employers.

The recommendation to “continue to increase the number of online courses” is a high priority for our office; therefore, we are continually working to increase our online course offerings, especially those courses that would appeal to our BLS and General Studies students.

We will continue to collaborate with the Career Services Office and encourage students to utilize their services. The issue of a required capstone will be taken to the Faculty Advisor Committee for discussion as will the other recommendations and an action plan will be developed.
THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: Board of Regent's Policy (§6.05B) requires that each Regent university review each academic program once every seven years to help ensure that the program being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality and consistent with the institution’s mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the teaching and learning processes, and on the collection and utilization of student outcomes assessment results for programmatic improvement.

1. Institution University of Northern Iowa

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: General Studies major

2b. List date(s) of program review: March 24-25, 2011

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes X No _____

3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: 2

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes _____ No X

4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes _____ No X

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? N/A Yes _____ No _____

6b. If not, why not? N/A

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

There were three main assessment recommendations that arose out of the 2011 Academic Program Review:

1. “Institute an early, required interaction with Career Services as a function of the Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies course. We were extremely impressed with the UNI’s Career Services. Students should be encouraged to take the courses Career Services offers and to make frequent trips to the offices. Direct assessments could stem from this interaction as well.”

2. “Institute a GS process instrument requiring GS students to reflect regularly on how they are integrating their courses of study into a coherent whole. This could be in the form of a brief process writing instrument, or a student survey.”

3. “Institute a required capstone for GS students for a direct assessment of student learning outcomes that they ‘discover the value of integrating various academic disciplines,’ and ‘combine course offerings in different academic to create a unique field of study.’ The capstone would require
students to reflect on the totality of their GS academic experience. It could also serve as an exit assessment instrument.”

Other recommendations included:

1. “Review faculty advisory board membership every two years to ensure the mix of representatives from each college is optimal.”

2. “Create an opportunity for social networking to help students get to know each other and establish a social club for students in the General Studies major.”

3. “Consider a name change to Interdisciplinary Studies. The name change to Interdisciplinary Studies would better define the true nature of the program.”

4. “Encourage current students to actively pursue opportunities provided to all students at UNI.”

5. “Encourage student and staff involvement in campus activities to carry the GS ‘banner’ forward for community education and acceptance.”

6. “Work with Career Services and with employers to find out how well GS students are doing after they leave UNI. A survey with employers would provide a third party outcome assessment.”

Conclusions resulting from the external review:

The external reviewers substantiated the conclusions of the Self-Study report and agreed that we should continue to refine and develop meaningful measurable outcomes that can be used to collect data to enhance the GS major and improve its overall quality.

Program improvements resulting from this review:

One of the recommendations resulting from this review was to require a capstone course for GS students. While we have not created a required course for GS students, we have created a course, to be taught every semester, called Foundations of Interdisciplinary Studies, which was created specifically for General Studies and BLS students. This course is designed to cultivate students’ growth of interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding and provide them with an opportunity to synthesize their academic experiences. Additionally, it allows students to integrate the skills and knowledge they have learned in their previous coursework and apply that knowledge to real-world situations and problems. One of the course assignments for the foundations course requires students to connect with the Career Services Office to develop a resume/cover letter and to participate in a mock interview with a Career Services Counselor.

We also offer a Guided Independent Study course, designed expressly for GS and BLS students, called Studies in Career Theory and Development. This course provides GS students with an opportunity to explore their vocational interests and career-related goals and also provides a connection to our Career Services Office. Additionally, we offer a course called Critical Thinking in a Democratic Society that was created to help students understand the individual and societal benefits of critical thinking. This course allows GS and BLS students to engage in purposeful reflective judgment, which is a top priority for most employers.

We will continue to collaborate with the Career Services Office and encourage students to utilize their services. The issue of a required capstone will be taken to the Faculty Advisor Committee for discussion as will the other recommendations and an action plan will be developed.

A survey has been created that allows GS graduates to reflect on their coursework and to demonstrate how the integration of knowledge across disciplines has benefited them both professionally and personally. We will continue to explore other areas of data collection.
THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: Board of Regent's Policy (§6.05B) requires that each Regent university review each academic program once every seven years to help ensure that the program being reviewed is still relevant, of the highest quality and consistent with the institution's mission and strategic plan. A special focus of the reviews is on assessing the teaching and learning processes, and on the collection and utilization of student outcomes assessment results for programmatic improvement.

1. Institution University of Northern Iowa

2a. List title and degree level(s) of the program reviewed: Graduate Program In Public Policy

2b. List date(s) of program review: August 2010 through May 2011

3a. Was the program reviewed by non-institutional evaluators? Yes No

3b. Number of non-institutional evaluators: 2

4a. Has there been a change in enrollment in the program of more than a third in the last three years? Yes No

4b. If yes, please explain the reasons for this change.

5. Is this the first time that this program has been reviewed since initial approval? Yes No

6a. If new, has the program met all the goals and objectives planned at the time it received planning approval by the Board of Regents? Yes No

6b. If not, why not?

7. List the recommendations, conclusions, and program improvements resulting from this review, especially those resulting from student outcomes assessments.

1. Replace comprehensive exams with a final paper or practicum - experimental implementation will begin in the fall of 2012. This will bring the program more in line with other professional degrees. The practicum will be a rigorous, carefully evaluated applied research project conducted by each student. However, the comps have been a major student outcomes assessment tool for the program. If they are replaced, a new outcomes assessment tool will need to be designed.

2. Shorten the length of the program – curriculum proposals to accomplish a reduction in credit hours will be submitted during the curriculum cycle beginning in the fall of 2012. These proposals will address issues of undergraduate prerequisites, as well as courses included in the program. Ideally, we will create a program that can be completed in 3 semesters of residence, rather than four, to make it more attractive to part time students.
3. Consider supplementing the MPP with a Masters in Public Administration program – there are currently not university resources available to implement this recommendation.

4. Seek accreditation for the program from the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration – this is a five year process, which will be initiated during the current academic year.