

Lake Erie College

Program Review Training and  
Information Sessions

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# What we will do today:

- Refresh our understanding of what we mean by Academic Program Review (APR) and Discuss Best Practices
- Discuss the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC's) stance on program review
- Tips for a Meaningful Submission and Steps You Can Take Now
- Brief Overview of the Topics in LEC's APR
- What Happens with the Reports?

# Academic Program Review Defined

- *“...improve the quality of academic units individually and the university as a whole. Academic reviews provide an opportunity for each academic unit to **reflect, self-assess, and plan**; they generate in-depth communication between the unit and the university administration, thus offering a vehicle to inform planning and decision-making...”* [Brown University Academic Program Review Guidelines and Procedures, 2012]

# Academic Program Best Practices

- An academic program review can be defined as an attempt to evaluate the performance of curricula, departments, faculty, and/or students at a degree-granting institution. Three primary elements are commonly employed:
  - An **internal, faculty-driven self-study** conducted by the institution itself;
  - An **external evaluation**, conducted by a committee appointed by the institution (typically comprised of academic peers and other specialists);
  - A **comprehensive evaluation of the two studies**, resulting in targeted recommendations or an action plan.

# What Does the HLC Say?

- Criterion 4. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.
- 4.A. The institution maintains a regular practice of program reviews

# Tips for An Effective Program Review

- **Be reflective:** This is a process of exploring and examining the program such as varying perspectives, attributes, experiences and strengths/weaknesses. It helps us gain insight and see how to move forward. What works? What doesn't? Why?
- **Be specific:** Link resource enhancement requests to the goals and targets, and specify why the program will be more effective as a result of achieving those goals.
- **Be realistic:** The self-study and external review should take into account the fiscal realities of the institution.
- **Be mindful of comparisons:** Look at what makes the program distinctive, why it matters, and how the program can improve based upon what it learns from competitors.
- **Be student focused:** Articulate outcomes and student successes. Likewise, write about what could be done better.

# Tips for An Effective Program Review (continued)

- **Know your audience:** The board, cabinet, deans, your colleagues, and the HLC will see the report.
- **Use data:** Use it to explain internal and external trends.
- **Be realistic:** Use clear evidentiary statements to support claims or statements made.

# What To Do Now

- Identify your external reviewer (LEO) and get the person scheduled
- Begin reviewing your data (LEO)
- Review rubrics (LEO)
- Review EPP Template (LEO)
- Start writing
- Ask lots of questions of your dean, colleagues, peers, etc.



# What Happens at the End of the Process?

- Planning
- Investments
- Maintain as is
- Further goal and target setting
- Elimination/dormancy
- Informs enrollment, fundraising, and marketing strategies

# Thank you!

- Questions?