***2013 PAR Self Study Report***

***Preliminary Note***

The Paralegal Program – its three faculty members, one faculty chair, and one administrative assistant – serve three Sinclair academic departments, PAR, LAW, and RES.

**PAR**

The primary focus of this report is the PAR department, which offers a single associate’s degree, PAR.S.AAS.

**LAW**

The LAW Department offers no degrees or certificates, and has no full-time faculty. It is coordinated by the PAR Chair. LAW currently produces three courses for the entire student body. Those courses also serve the Paralegal Program. Two of those (Domestic Violence, Consumer Law) are Paralegal Program electives. The third, Business Law, is a required course in the Paralegal Program. It is also an Ohio TAG course. It is offered online and in classroom mode in both semesters and in summer term. It draws an enrollment of about 1,100 annually.

In this report, the LAW Department will be referenced at times in the PAR section, but is discussed primarily in a separate section found after the PAR report and appendices.

**RES**

The RES Department offers one degree, RES.S.AAS. This degree program draws few majors.

The primary function of RES is to provide students with a pre-license certificate that is required for individuals who wish to take the Ohio Real Estate Salesperson licensing exam from the Ohio Division of Real Estate. This is the Ohio Real Estate Sales Associate certificate, RESS.S.STC.

The RES Department has no full-time faculty, and thus is taught entirely by adjuncts. It is supported by the PAR Chair, and a part-time RES coordinator, Martha Taylor, who is also a full-time faculty member of CIS.

In this report, the RES Department will be discussed in a separate section found after the PAR report and appendices.

**Department/Program Review**

**Self-Study Report Template**

**2012 - 2013**

**Department: Paralegal**

**Program: Paralegal**

**Section I: Overview of Department**

1. **Mission of the department and its programs(s)**

What is the purpose of the department and its programs? What publics does the department serve through its instructional programs? What positive changes in students, the community and/or disciplines/professions is the department striving to effect?

**1. Paralegal definition; program mission**

**Paralegal definition:** Paralegals perform substantive and procedural legal work as authorized by law. This work, in the absence of the paralegal, would be performed by an attorney. Paralegals have knowledge of the law gained through education, or education and work experience, which qualifies them to perform legal work. Paralegals adhere to recognized ethical standards and rules of professional responsibility.

**Program mission:** The Paralegal Program Advisory Committee adopted this mission statement in 2007: *The Paralegal Program provides a practical and interactive learning environment that prepares ethical, competent paralegals with analytical, communication, and technical skills necessary to excel in a diverse legal community.*

The department pursues this mission by providing student-centered learning opportunities, featuring authentic legal assignments performed in a simulated law office environment. Upon graduation, graduates are prepared to function effectively and ethically under the supervision of attorneys. These graduates meet the community’s need for paralegals who possess broad legal knowledge and technology skills, and can perform legal tasks cost-effectively.

**2. Publics served through the department’s instructional programs**

**Students** are served through rigorous preparation for the work force. The program offers a simulated law firm environment with a hands-on approach to learning. The program also requires a semester-long internship experience in the legal community prior to graduation. These internships allow graduates to enter the profession with confidence that they can perform effectively and ethically in the legal workplace.

The department serves **the legal community** (1) by providing competent, usually unpaid, interns; and (2) by providing competent, entry level paralegals to serve in a broad array of employment settings. These interns and paralegals work in private law firms, corporate law departments, insurance companies, title companies, financial institutions, the courts, a variety of government settings (such as clerk of courts, prosecutor’s offices, public defender offices), state agencies (such as the Attorney General, the Department of Education, the Department of Commerce), and non-profit agencies (such as Bar Associations, Legal Aid Societies, the Ohio Legal Rights Service).

The Sinclair Paralegal Program puts a spotlight on the legal profession and the paralegals working locally, when it hosts an annual Paralegal Day Celebration in May. One top paralegal and one top law firm receive awards based on nominations from the general legal public. This event showcases the program for local employers and gives the local community a forum for recognizing the invaluable contribution of paralegals to the legal profession.

In addition, **the general public** is served by the education of competent paralegal professionals, thus making legal services more affordable.

**Program** **graduates** are served with ongoing job placement assistance, including job postings, individual assistance and referrals, and recommendation letters for employment and additional degree pursuit. The department also provides the opportunity for continuing legal education for program graduates working in the legal community, through course audit.

**Local nonprofit agencies** are served by the personal work contributions of students through service learning opportunities. These activities also work to the benefit of the participating students, who can begin a life-long habit of community service, while developing job skills and learning how community nonprofit services operate. Student work that exceeds course requirements is captured in individual Merit Journals to supplement student resumes, and also becomes eligible for a Paralegal Service Award.

**3. Positive changes sought.**

The program strives to change students by helping them to not only learn legal concepts but also how to apply them productively. Significant effort is placed on modifying student behaviors to meet professionalism standards expected in the legal community. Teaching students to use critical thinking skills in an ethical manner enhances both the paralegal profession and the discipline of law.

The legal community can be improved by gaining the assistance of competent paraprofessionals who can add efficiency and economy to law offices and related organizations.

The community can be improved with cost-effective legal services through the valuable assistance paralegals provide to attorneys. Providing well-trained, professional paralegals improves the image of the discipline. The program works to improve awareness of lawyers of the cost-effectiveness of using professionally-trained paralegals.

1. **Description of the self-study process**

Briefly describe the process the department followed to examine its status and prepare for this review. What were the strengths of the process, and what would the department do differently in its next five-year review?

**1. Process of the self-study**

For this self-study, the department first reviewed the annual department meeting minutes and retreat minutes, the last department review report, and the most recent annual update reports. In addition, since the paralegal program is approved by the American Bar Association (ABA), the department reviewed the extensive self-study that was required for ABA interim reports, completed in 2007, 2011, and 2012. The full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and Advisory Committee reviewed departmental strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, and contributed to the environmental scan. After reviewing all of the items listed above, and the data set provided by the college, the department chair developed a rough draft responding to the template questions. The report was then reviewed, discussed, and edited by the entire faculty. Finally, the report was reviewed by the division dean.

Contributing greatly to the value of these self-examination opportunities are two additional key players: Jane Moix, the experienced department administrative assistant, who tracks departmental progress; and Marina Dodaro, the adjunct technology instructor (and PAR graduate), who helps collect data and analyze trends in the legal community.

**2. Strengths of the process and proposed changes**

The continuous improvement practices of the college and department prepared the program well for the program review process, though impeded by the limited number of faculty in a small department, the turnover of half of the full-time faculty in the past three years, and the demands of semester conversion.

Additionally, the ABA approval process requires constant program self-scrutiny.

One significant change for future reviews will be increasing the participation of PAR faculty as they gain teaching and administrative experience. Also, it will be helpful for the department to implement its new assessment plan, and routinize the collection of desired data.

**Section II: Overview of Program**

1. **Analysis of environmental factors**

This analysis, initially developed in a collaborative meeting between the Director of Curriculum and Assessment and the department chairperson, provides important background on the environmental factors surrounding the program. Department chairpersons and faculty members have an opportunity to revise and refine the analysis as part of the self-study process.

**1. Environmental scan.** An environmental scan was created by the chair and the Director of Curriculum and Assessment, and analyzed at a subsequent PAR faculty meeting. See Appendix 3.

**2. Key stakeholders** of the paralegal program include paralegal students, faculty, and graduates. External stakeholders include members of the legal community: attorneys in private practices and in corporate legal departments, courts, law libraries, financial institutions, title companies, legal aid and public defender offices, prosecutors’ offices, victim witness programs, insurance agencies, nonprofit legal service entities, and local consumers of legal services. Organizations include the Greater Dayton Paralegal Association/Dayton Bar Association Paralegal Committee, the American Association of Paralegal Educators (AAfPE), the PAR Advisory Committee, the Dayton Bar Association, and the external program approval entity, the American Bar Association.

**3. Meeting the need.** The department assesses how stakeholder needs are being met through:

* Graduate and employer survey data
* Student surveys
* Self-assessment feedback from current students
* PAR Advisory Committee feedback
* One-on-one meetings and evaluations from internship supervisors
* Faculty department meetings and the annual department retreat
* American Bar Association reapproval process

**4. Challenges/concerns**

**a. Identified challenges and concerns:**

* Improving written and oral communication skills and technology skills of new students
* Meeting the growing need for technology fluency in a variety of legal software programs in a cost-effective manner, and with instructional support for students
* Effective marketing to maintain or increase enrollment
* Expanding paralegal job market to improve demand for graduates
* Ensuring the maintenance of a strong faculty, full and part-time
* Meeting demand of students for course offerings in all time slots
* Increasing distance learning course development and implementation

**b. Who feeds your program?**

• Local high schools

• Local career technical schools

• Local law firms and other employers

• Internal and external transfer students

• Twelve Sinclair degree programs feed the Law Department, by requiring LAW 1101, Business Law.

**c. Reliance on other departments**

* Sinclair Library maintains a mini-legal library section used by paralegal students, reserved library space for legal research classes, and an online LibGuide of paralegal resources
* Information Technology for program and student technology support
* Distance Learning for online course support
* Tutorial Services and the Writing Center to help students with study needs and less than optimum writing skills
* The Center for Teaching and Learning to help faculty promote active learning, student engagement, and the use of technology in the classroom
* Communication department to improve oral communication skills
* English department to improve written communication skills
* BIS department to assist with teaching technology skills
* Other departments providing required degree courses are Accounting, Math, Humanities, Psychology, Sociology

**d. Opportunities to help stakeholders**

* Offering continuing paralegal education
* Creating paralegal certificates to give current students specialized credentials (for example, Legal Technology Certificate, Law Office Management Certificate)
* Creating a paralegal certificate program for bachelor’s degree holders
* Articulation agreements that need renewal under semester format
* Full utilization of courtroom-classroom in Building 19 for paralegal training
* Experiential learning credit options
* Collaboration with BPS internship coordinator, especially for data analysis
* Education of legal community on efficiencies and economies paralegals can provide to legal operations
* Providing time and opportunities for full-time faculty to improve teaching skills through CTL or regional/national organizations, and to meet professional continuing legal education requirements

**e. Data used for decision-making**

* Statistics and recommendations from the American Bar Association reapproval process
* Graduate and employer surveys (RAR)
* One-on-one meetings with internship supervisors
* Internship supervisor written evaluations
* Community survey data (RAR)
* Department warehouse data
* Student course surveys
* Graduate exit surveys
* Average class size data
* FTE reports
* BPS employment survey
* Registration, admissions data
* Contribution margin data
* Bureau of Labor Statistics paralegal job growth and pay projections
* Robert Half Annual Legal Salary Guide paralegal statistics
* Ohio Jobs & Family Services, Paralegals median income & employment projections
* Ohio Bureau of Labor Market Information rankings, Paralegals and Legal Assistants
* Student intake surveys

**f. Data is weakest on**

* Graduate tracking
* Assessing skills of entry level students
* Graduates transferring to four year institutions
* Gauging student success in other departments related to paralegal skills
* Adjunct effectiveness in student engagement, use of technology, grading feedback

**g. Actions to take if data available**

* Accurately increase our focus on weak student skills
* Better design entry level courses
* Improve student academic advising
* Know where best to improve program
* Market analysis
* Salary level analysis
* Improve placement services
* Improve communications with graduates
* Improve adjunct training
* Improve adjunct classroom skills

1. **Statement of program learning outcomes and linkage to courses**

Include the program outcomes for each program(s) in Section V.

See Appendix 7 for program learning outcomes and linkages

1. **Admission requirements**

List any admission requirements specific to the department/program. How well have these requirements served the goals of the department/program? Are any changes in these requirements anticipated? If so, what is the rationale for these changes?

Admission requirements for the paralegal program exceed those of the college generally. Applicants must enter with a GPA of at least 2.0. Applicants must have placement scores that indicate the student is ready for college English and Math. Students must pass any needed development course before they are eligible for the program. The only changes expected in these policies are: (1) implementing additional tests of writing competencies; (2) strategies to improve completion rates by connecting students who need developmental assistance with career pathway coursework.

**Section III: Student Learning**

1. **Evidence of student mastery of general education competencies**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in general education competencies? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying general education competencies in the program?

**Student proficiency in general education competencies.** All PAR degree students are required to complete courses in English Composition I & II, Text Editing, Interpersonal Communications, and Business Software Applications; these courses are all proficient in developing general education competencies. In paralegal courses, the general education writing and communication checklists are used to assess student skills in most paralegal classes. Examples of how each type of rubric has been integrated into PAR classes to assess general education competencies are detailed in Appendix 7.

**Departmental strategies for improving student performance.** Many paralegal students excel in all of these areas, but some students struggle to succeed. Deficiencies are most often seen in students’ written communication skills. As a result, the department asked the Director of Curriculum and Assessment to research whether students who had completed their general education English Composition classes did better in Legal Research & Writing than students who had not completed English. We were interested in evaluating whether English Composition should be a prerequisite for Legal Research & Writing. The results seemed to suggest that it did not matter whether a student had taken English Composition before Legal Research & Writing. For this reason, we have not implemented this prerequisite, but we are still discussing strategies for encouraging students to increase the English courses they take before their writing-intensive paralegal courses.

The program also implemented strategies in class to help students be more successful. Students are required to take a skills assessment at the beginning of Legal Research and Writing to help them and their instructors evaluate their skill levels. Visiting the Sinclair Writing Center has also been made mandatory for several assignments, to help students on individual assignments, as well as to familiarize them with this valuable learning resource on campus.

1. **Evidence of student achievement in the learning outcomes for the program**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in the learning outcomes for the program? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying the learning outcomes? Based on the department’s self-study, are there any planned changes in program learning outcomes?

Every PAR course requires that students demonstrate proficiency in one or more of the program outcomes:

1. Competently prepare and interpret legal documents.

2. Exemplify a high standard of ethical and professional behavior individually, and as a member of a legal team.

3. Competently conduct factual and legal research and communicate the results clearly and concisely.

4. Demonstrate competency in current technology.

Student success rates in the PAR courses where these outcomes are assessed have ranged from 76.4% to 95.8% in recent years. Specifically, each program outcome is assessed as detailed in Appendix 7.

Student proficiency is monitored throughout their progress in the Paralegal Program. Student skill levels are self-described in an Intake Survey when they enter the program, then assessed in a Graduate Survey at completion. All students must attain a grade of C or better in every PAR course, and must maintain an overall GPA of at least 2.0. Quality standards, including good grammar, spelling, and punctuation, of all student work product must be met in all PAR courses. Additionally, high standards of ethical behavior and professionalism are demanded by all instructors throughout the program.

One departmental requirement that ensures students master all material is the obligation of students to prepare course notebooks in all PAR courses. This requirement mandates that every student correct most PAR assignments and present the accurate versions in a class notebook for a grade at the end of the semester. One purpose of this requirement is to ensure that student performance errors are reviewed and remedied, not just forgotten. Cumulatively, this requirement demonstrates that all successful students have mastered the program learning outcomes.

In addition, prior to graduation all PAR students are required to submit a portfolio of their coursework. These individual portfolios include the contents of all the class notebooks that were prepared throughout the program. All work must be accurate, consistently displayed, and presented in a professional manner. This cumulative evidence of proficiency documents student accomplishment, and becomes a display of competency for employment interviews, as well as a permanent resource for professional paralegal production in the workplace.

No changes are planned in program outcomes at this time.

1. **Evidence of student demand for the program**

How has/is student demand for the program changing? Why? Should the department take steps to increase the demand? Decrease the demand? Eliminate the program? What is the likely future demand for this program and why?

**Enrollment rates:** PAR enrollment (FTE) has grown by about 5% from FY 2009 to FY 2013 (Projected), and LAW enrollment has grown over 17%. See Appendix 5. Paralegal courses operate at or near the seat capacity in each scheduled classroom.

**Cohort sequencing and potential program growth:** Enrollment in the Paralegal Program is about optimal, given the following additional constraints: (1) The department is small, with only four full-time faculty. (2) One of those four faculty members is also responsible for chair duties for three departments, PAR, LAW, and RES. (3) Some PAR classes are limited in capacity to 16, because they require extensive writing assistance for students, and are heavy in grading demands. (4) Almost all PAR courses require computer-equipped classrooms, which maxes classroom size at 24 for most classes. (5) All PAR students are required to complete an internship prior to graduation. Students are accepted into the program in the fall and spring semesters. The maximum number of new students that can be accepted in the current classroom space and staffing structure is 72 in the fall and 48 in the spring, or 120 total. Demand has remained fairly consistent at about 100 per year for the past five years. The elements of the program – faculty staffing, curriculum coordination, course sequencing, class size, internship opportunities, graduate placement – operate at close to maximum capacity, so increased entrance demand would make it necessary to maintain a waiting list for applicants. In the past, that has not proven necessary.

The only logical blueprint for growing the Paralegal Program would require three phases: (1) a concentrated effort to educate the local business and legal communities about the value-added results of hiring professional paralegals; (2) essentially doubling the size of the PAR department – every individual aspect of the PAR program is interdependent and operating at capacity, so every aspect would have to be duplicated to retain the same successful results; (3) a commitment to a student recruitment program that would compete with commercial paralegal schools for the students who are not choosing Sinclair for their paralegal studies. The second two phases would be costly undertakings. So, at this time the program has no plans for significant enrollment growth.

**Paralegal student demand factors:** Prospective paralegal students are attracted to the profession by an individual interest in the law, plus (1) attractive paralegal working conditions, (2) growing paralegal job prospects, and (3) solid paralegal wage prospects. The latter three factors are analyzed below.

**(1) Attractive** **paralegal** **working conditions:** Considering satisfactory pay, good working conditions, low unemployment, and low stress, a paralegal career ranks as one of the Ten Most Underrated jobs, according to a *Forbes* report. A *U.S.News & World Report* study ranks paralegals as #23 in 2013 Best Social Service Jobs, with average ratings in job satisfaction categories of upward mobility, stress level, and flexibility, plus good job prospects. “The anticipated growth is leaps and bounds above that of lawyers. The difference makes becoming a paralegal a great option for individuals who are interested in law but don't want to endure the longer process of becoming a lawyer.”

**(2) Growing** **paralegal** **job prospects:** The demand for well-qualified paralegals should continue. The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics projects increased employment of 18% from 2010 to 2020.

The state Department of Jobs and Family Services confirms the projected 18% growth rate for paralegals in Ohio for 2008-18.

Sinclair’s Career Coach online service indicates there are about 1,500 paralegals employed within 50 miles of Dayton, with about 400 approaching retirement age. About 50 paralegal job openings are projected in this service area each year. The Sinclair Paralegal Program graduates about 35 new paralegals a year, enough to meet most of current market demand. If growth projections bear out, about 70 new paralegal jobs a year will be the norm by 2018, so doubling the rate of program graduates may become a prudent objective in the future. However, the Dayton area legal market has not yet shown the ability to absorb more high-quality Sinclair paralegal interns and graduates than are currently entering the job market annually; additionally, local the legal marketplace has contracted recently with the rest of the economy.

**(3) Solid** **paralegal** **wage prospects:** Expert sources report attractive paralegal wage expectations.

(a) The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a median annual wage of $46,680 in May 2010 for paralegals and legal assistants nationally.

(b) Locally, the 2011 median annual wage is reported by the State of Ohio at $47,623, with the starting wage in the Dayton MSA stated at $35,422, and median wage at $47,611.

(c) An often-cited non-governmental source, Robert Half International, estimates the following 2012 salary range for a “Junior Paralegal/Legal Assistant (2-3 Years experience)” at a small/midsize law firm, using national figures with a Dayton, Ohio, 87.5% adjustment: $31,937 to $40,250.

1. **Evidence of program quality from external sources (e.g., advisory committees, accrediting agencies, etc.)**

What evidence does the department have about evaluations or perceptions of department/program quality from sources outside the department? In addition to off-campus sources, include perceptions of quality by other departments/programs on campus where those departments are consumers of the instruction offered by the department.

The American Bar Association first approved the paralegal program in 1990. Sinclair’s program was the first in the Miami Valley to attain ABA approval. The program has been reapproved three times since that date, most recently in 2007. ABA approval is an indication that the program has successfully met rigorous national standards.

Sinclair's Paralegal Program has an excellent reputation in the Miami Valley. Graduates are sought after, hired, and retained. Surveys by employers reveal high approval. (See Appendix 2.)

In a 2008 Paralegal Recent Graduate Survey conducted by the college research department, over 93% of respondents said Sinclair adequately prepared them for their job duties, and over 93% said they would choose Sinclair again. (See Appendix 2.)

In a 2006 Paralegal Employer Survey conducted by the college research department, PAR graduates exceeded Sinclair College averages for all of these job skills, scoring 4.5 or above (out of 5.0) in all categories. (See Appendix 2.)

* Job-related conceptual knowledge
* Job-related technical knowledge
* Work attitude (Professionalism)
* Quality of work
* Critical thinking/Problem-solving abilities
* Communication/ Interpersonal Skills
* Overall job preparation

1. **Evidence of the placement/transfer of graduates**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding the extent to which its students transfer to other institutions? How well do students from the department/program perform once they have transferred? What evidence does the department have regarding the rate of employment of its graduates? How well do the graduates perform once employed?

**Transferability:** The paralegal program AAS is a "terminal" degree and not a transfer module. Most graduates do not seek to immediately transfer to four year colleges. However, students are encouraged to continue their education and each year several former students report graduating with additional degrees or request recommendations for graduate school and law school.

**Graduation:** Graduation rates for the PAR.AAS degree have remained stable. This represents a completion rate for students who enroll as PAR majors at 25-35%. This is higher than the college average, but will be closely monitored at the department and the college work to improve completion rates.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Academic Year | 2007−08 | 2008−09 | 2009−10 | 2010−11 | 2011-12 |
| **New PAR Student Enrollment** | 106 | 109 | 105 | 105 | 95 |
| **0423−Paralegal Degrees Awarded** | 31 | 34 | 36 | 32 | 47 |

**Employment:** The program attempts to maintain contact with all recent graduates. Graduates are encouraged to keep in touch with the department, since they will be asked to complete surveys in compliance with ABA requirements. Because of the prestige derived from being a graduate of an ABA-approved college program, former students usually respond favorably to information requests.

Tracking and communicating with PAR graduates is challenging the longer they are gone from the college. Alumni activities, Paralegal Day celebrations, instructor references, and job postings are services that motivate some graduates to maintain contact. Continuing education opportunities would provide another incentive, if those can be developed. Social media had proven beneficial to these efforts, but are time-consuming to maintain. Neither the department nor the college (or any college, to our knowledge) has fully solved this communication challenge, which hampers reporting of evidence of post-graduation education and employment success.

**Graduate performance:** As stated above in section D, employer surveys reveal a high degree of satisfaction with Sinclair paralegal graduates.

1. **Evidence of the cost-effectiveness of the department/program**

How does the department/program characterize its cost-effectiveness? What would enhance the cost-effectiveness of the department/program? Are there considerations in the cost-effectiveness of the department/program that are unique to the discipline or its methods of instruction?

PAR and LAW average class size figures compare favorably with college and division averages. See Appendix 4 for details.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| (Dayton Campus) | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
| Sinclair | 18.27 | 18.33 | 19.06 | 18.18 |
| BPS Division | 18.09 | 20.42 | 20.57 | 18.94 |
| **LAW Department** | **26.57** | **26.30** | **25.96** | **20.35** |
| **PAR Department** | **18.67** | **18.59** | **18.42** | **19.10** |

The program cost per FTE for the PAR Department exceeds the Business Division average. (See Appendix 5.) This is to be expected, considering the specialized requirements of maintaining American Bar Association approval, and the cost of maintaining professional status of the professors as licensed attorneys. ABA requirements prescribe that paralegal educators must be licensed attorneys. The program costs are balanced by a lack of equipment, material, laboratory or other capital costs. The PAR program costs are also more than offset by the impact of LAW revenues. The negative PAR contribution margin of ($77,523) in 2012 must be considered in light of the LAW contribution margin of $456,551 generated in the same year with the same department personnel.

**Section IV: Department/Program Status and Goals**

1. **List the department’s/program’s strengths, weaknesses and opportunities**

The strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities are detailed in Appendix 3.

**Strengths:**

* American Bar Association approval standards
* Team teacher program
* PAR new student orientation
* Service learning
* Elevated standards
* Exacting policies governing student performance
* Mandatory internship program
* Student portfolio requirement
* Annual Paralegal Day observance
* Student Merit Journals
* Legal technology coordinator/instructor
* Legal software for student training, some at no cost
* LexisNexis paralegal student license agreement
* Designated scholarships
* Paralegal Student Association
* Paralegal Advisory Committee
* Fresh tenure track faculty

**Weaknesses:**

* Small department size
* Fresh tenure track faculty
* Lexis licensing issues
* Team teacher funding.
* Inconsistent leadership of Paralegal Alumni Chapter
* Adjunct participation inconsistent
* Adjunct communication
* Legal software issues
* Pacer access
* Paralegal Day impediments
* Tutoring availability

**Opportunities:**

* New courtroom-classroom
* Internship resources
* Lab fee option
* Increased networking
* Certificate for 4-year degree holders
* Supplemental certificates
* Articulation agreements
* Experiential learning
* Continuing paralegal education
* Distance learning opportunities
* Grant opportunities

1. **Describe the status of the department’s/program’s work on any issues or recommendations that surfaced in the last department review.**

See Appendix 6

1. **Based on feedback from environmental scans, community needs assessment, advisory committees, accrediting agencies, Student Services, and other sources external to the department, how well is the department responding to the (1) current and (2) emerging needs of the community? The college?**

**Current community needs:** The department examines community needs in several ways. Community feedback is one of the primary functions of the Paralegal Advisory Committee, which meets with faculty twice a year. With the assistance of Sinclair’s Research, Analytics & Reporting, surveys are conducted of paralegal graduates, of the employers of paralegal graduates, and of the greater legal community. (See Appendix 2.) All paralegal students are required to perform a semester-long internship supervised by a practicing attorney, and the PAR Internship Coordinator conducts individual interviews with all of these internship supervisors to evaluate student performance and assess the skills required. (See Appendix 2.)

These surveys reveal a high degree of satisfaction, as do paralegal graduate surveys (See Appendix 2.), and evaluations completed by internship supervisors. (See Appendix 2).

**Emerging community needs:** The most significant are occurring in the area of technology. Many courts recently started allowing or requiring documents be electronically filed. The department has added student training in ECF, electronic court filing. Additional technology training is also required in the creation and management of .PDF documents to meet court filing requirements for attachments to court submissions. Real estate records are now available on-line. With the cooperation of the Montgomery County Recorder’s Office, students are now trained in electronic records retrieval rather than hard-copy searching at public offices.

**Current college needs:** The department, with the invaluable help of the admissions coordinator, is working to ensure projected enrollment figures are met. New semester materials have been developed. Costs are closely monitored to ensure the department stays within budget.

**Emerging college needs:** The program will work to align its policies with the college’s completion agenda and improve student success rates.

1. **List noteworthy innovations in instruction, curriculum and student learning over the last five years**

**Semester Conversion:** The PAR Department in FY 10-11 and FY 11-12 revised the curriculum for all PAR courses to fit semester parameters. The content of every course was revised. The department also used the opportunity to restructure the program configuration as well. Courses in Workers’ Compensation, Social Security Law, and Administrative Law were eliminated due to lack of paralegal job opportunities in those areas. Criminal Law was reassigned from required to elective status for the same reason. The Contracts course was eliminated, the essential content moved to Business Law, and then Business Law was designated as a required PAR course. Litigation was designated as a co-requisite with the introductory courses of Paralegal Principles and Legal Technology, to give students a faster entry into their program of study. And the two quarter internship courses were combined into one semester course, to give students a faster entry into the workplace.

**Student Advising:** In AY 10-11, PAR faculty personally advised all students who had completed at least half of their program requirements, to assist their planning for program completion in anticipation of semester conversion. The PAR faculty then personally advised most first-quarter students on their academic plans, in order to help them map out the process of beginning their studies under quarters, and completing them under semesters. New planning guides were prepared to assist in this process. In AY 11-12, all PAR students who would not complete their degree programs in quarters were advised at the department level of completion requirements and options, and then encouraged to prepare a MAP with a college academic advisor.

**Student Advising Tool:** The Program put technology to work to improve advising for PAR students during semester conversion. First, the planning tools that students need to map out their quarter or semester degree programs – course offerings, calendars, prerequisites, electives, suggested scheduling paths, etc. – were all posted in the Angel PAR Law Office group. Second, all Sinclair academic advisors were then enrolled in this Angel group, giving them electronic access for the first time to the same program-specific tools, in order to better guide paralegal students and help them prepare quality MAPs.

**Cost Savings:** Collaboration with the Sinclair Library in recent years resulted in $13,600 of savings every year, through elimination of ongoing legal subscriptions. Additionally, a review of the legal holdings contracted the book inventory considerably. Faculty are still able to meet the essential needs for paralegal student research, and also meet the library services requirements of the American Bar Association, through elimination of duplicate materials, expanded use of available online resources, and shifting some student research functions to off-campus law libraries.

Further, a change in policy developed by PAR faculty in FY 09-10 to cut down on printed course materials, and make more documents available to students online is yielding savings of about $2,000 a year.

**Paralegal Service Learning:** During past two academic years, several service learning projects were implemented. Paralegal students were paired with attorneys from public interest agencies to do research on actual issues the law offices were working on for their clients, work that might not have otherwise been performed due to budget cuts faced by these agencies. In addition, Legal Research & Writing students visited Miami Valley Career Technology Center, to help the high school students in MVCTC’s Legal Assisting program learn how to use the Lexis online legal research tool. Additional service learning opportunities are planned.

**Personnel:** In the past two academic years, a retirement and a departure led to the hiring and mentoring of a two new tenure track faculty members. An additional retirement at the end of the current school year will leave only one faculty member, the chair, with more than three years’ experience at Sinclair.

**American Bar Association Approval Report:** An extensive report was completed for the ABA in 2011 as part of the paralegal program approval process. It included the first comprehensive Assessment Plan developed for the Paralegal Program. Then, an additional Major Change Report was required in 2012 to detail the conversion of the program from quarters to semesters structure. Another comprehensive approval report and national team site visit is scheduled for 2014.

1. **What are the department’s/program’s goals and rationale for expanding and improving student learning, including new courses, programs, delivery formats and locations?**

The department continues to evaluate its required and elective courses. Based on input from the Advisory Board, internship meetings, graduate surveys and community surveys, the department is committed to expanding its selection of one- and two-hour electives, when appropriate. These courses give current students the basics for expanding their knowledge of specialty areas of the law and also provide opportunities for graduates to upgrade skills. Currently under consideration are courses in Elder Law, Mortgage Foreclosures, and Health Care Law.

There is currently no plan to offer paralegal courses at other locations. The library requirements, software requirements, and faculty limitations do not make that feasible at this time. However, the department is committed to assisting the Courseview Campus in establishing an ABA-approved paralegal program when CVCC decides to move that project forward.

1. **What are the department’s goals and rationale for reallocating resources? Discontinuing courses?**

As an ABA approved program, the department must meet specific staffing requirements. There is currently sufficient faculty to satisfy the ABA. The faculty has worked with vendors to locate reasonable software and the college has provided sufficient hardware. As long as budgets stay fairly constant, there are no plans to reallocate resources.

The department used the semester conversion opportunity to restructure the program configuration. Courses in Workers’ Compensation, Social Security Law, and Administrative Law were eliminated due to lack of paralegal job opportunities in those areas. Plans to offer an Estate Tax course were scrapped due to changes in state law. There is no plan to discontinue any other PAR course at this time. All PAR offerings have appropriate enrollment numbers. However, courses are constantly reviewed to ensure that they are still relevant and in demand.

A survey of entering paralegal students showed a preference for day classes over evenings, by a 2:1 margin; Friday and weekend classes were rejected; and a fifth prefer online classes. Over 40% say they intend to pursue education beyond their two-year degree. While only a quarter use other technologies, students almost unanimously use smart phones and Facebook. This feedback will assist in course scheduling decisions and student outreach efforts.

1. **What resources and other assistance are needed to accomplish the department’s/program’s goals?**

**Marketing**. Improved marketing would help ensure that enrollment projections are met. Continued distance learning department services would help the program provide more opportunities to offer online classes.

**Team teachers.** The PAR team teacher program, which brings currently employed paralegals (all PAR graduates) into the classroom to model professional conduct and demonstrate current legal practices, appears regularly in student/graduate assessments as one of the most beneficial features of the program. Formerly funded by the college, and most recently funded by contributions of lawyers and faculty, support of this program should be stabilized with a student fee so that the costs are supported by the beneficiaries.

**Faculty support level.** Recent years of faculty turnover resulted in an influx of new ideas and skills, but a loss of experience in administrative, curriculum, and mentoring skills. Two of the four full-time PAR faculty members have less than three years at the college, and a third has announced retirement.

Currently, 50% of PAR Program courses are taught by full-time faculty. For the entire PAR/LAW/RES Department, only 26% of courses and 23% of FTE are taught by full-time faculty.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Full Time/Part Time Faculty Ratios FA 09 – SU 12 Combined** | | | | |
|  | **PAR** | **LAW** | **RES** | **PAR/LAW/RES** |
| FT / PT | FT / PT | FT / PT | **FT / PT** |
| Courses Taught Ratio | 50% / 50% | 15% / 85% | 0% / 100% | **26% / 74%** |
| Pay Hours  Ratio | 65% / 35% | 11% / 89% | 2% / 98% | **35% / 65%** |
| FTE  Ratio | 53% / 47% | 13% / 87% | 0% / 100% | **23% / 77%** |

Maintaining sufficient full-time faculty to teach specialized law courses, coordinate a specialized curriculum, and oversee part-time faculty is important to the department’s continued success. (See Appendix 8.)

**Department/Program Review**

**Self-Study Report Template**

**2012 - 2013**

**Department: Law**

**Program: N/A**

**Section I: Overview of Department**

1. **Mission of the department and its programs(s)**

What is the purpose of the department and its programs? What publics does the department serve through its instructional programs? What positive changes in students, the community and/or disciplines/professions is the department striving to effect?

**LAW Department:** The LAW Department offers no degrees or certificates. It has no full-time faculty. It provides three courses, and serves two constituencies.

1. *The Paralegal Program.* Paralegal students are provided by LAW with two electives and one required course.
   1. LAW 1101 (TAG), Business Law – required course, classroom and online
   2. LAW 1102, Consumer Law – elective course, online only
   3. LAW 1103, Domestic Violence – elective course, online only
2. *Other Sinclair Departments.* These three courses are also offered to the general Sinclair student population. Most importantly, LAW serves the students of the following degree programs, for which Business Law is a required course.
3. ACC.S.AAS Accounting
4. PAR.S.AAS Paralegal
5. RES.S.AAS Real Estate
6. BIS.S.AAS Business Information Systems
7. BIMO.S.AAS Business Information Systems/Medical Office
8. BIPCA.S.AAS Business Information Systems/Personal Computer Applications
9. GBM.S.AAS Business Management
10. ENTR.S.AAS Business Management/Entrepreneurship
11. SCM.S.AAS Business Management/Supply Chain Management
12. CAO.S.AAS Hospitality Management & Tourism/Culinary Arts
13. ENT.S.CRT Entrepreneurship
14. BUS.S.AS Business Administration
15. **Description of the self-study process**

Briefly describe the process the department followed to examine its status and prepare for this review. What were the strengths of the process, and what would the department do differently in its next five-year review?

Coordination of the Law Department is the responsibility of the Paralegal Program chair, who prepared this information.

**Section II: Overview of Program**

1. **Analysis of environmental factors**

This analysis, initially developed in a collaborative meeting between the Director of Curriculum and Assessment and the department chairperson, provides important background on the environmental factors surrounding the program. Department chairpersons and faculty members have an opportunity to revise and refine the analysis as part of the self-study process.

No environmental scan has ever been undertaken for LAW.

1. **Statement of program learning outcomes and linkage to courses**

Include the program outcomes for each program(s) in Section V.

N/A

1. **Admission requirements**

List any admission requirements specific to the department/program. How well have these requirements served the goals of the department/program? Are any changes in these requirements anticipated? If so, what is the rationale for these changes?

None

**Section III: Student Learning**

1. **Evidence of student mastery of general education competencies**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in general education competencies? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying general education competencies in the program?

No data collected.

1. **Evidence of student achievement in the learning outcomes for the program**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in the learning outcomes for the program? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying the learning outcomes? Based on the department’s self-study, are there any planned changes in program learning outcomes?

N/A

1. **Evidence of student demand for the program**

How has/is student demand for the program changing? Why? Should the department take steps to increase the demand? Decrease the demand? Eliminate the program? What is the likely future demand for this program and why?

As the college program data below indicates, enrollment has been very stable in the Business Law (LAW 101 & LAW 1101) course, which constitutes a majority of the departmental enrollment. See Appendix 4 for additional data.

**Enrollment by Course**

**Seat Count**

**For: 0422-Law**

**Course LAW-101 Business Law**

**Summer Fall Winter Spring**

**Fiscal Year Seats *%*  Seats % Seats % Seats % Total**

**FY2008-09** 122 *12.03* 330 *32.54* 295 *29.09* 267 *26.33* **1,014**

**FY2009-10** 152 *13.76* 356 *32.22* 316 *28.60* 281 *25.43* **1,105**

**FY2010-11** 135 *11.35* 381 *32.04* 319 *26.83* 354 *29.77* **1,189**

**FY2011-12** 164 *13.58* 389 *32.20* 312 *25.83* 343 *28.39* **1,208**

**FY2012-13** 187 *16.74* 465 *41.63* 465 *41.63* **1,117**

1. **Evidence of program quality from external sources (e.g., advisory committees, accrediting agencies, etc.)**

What evidence does the department have about evaluations or perceptions of department/program quality from sources outside the department? In addition to off-campus sources, include perceptions of quality by other departments/programs on campus where those departments are consumers of the instruction offered by the department.

N/A

1. **Evidence of the placement/transfer of graduates**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding the extent to which its students transfer to other institutions? How well do students from the department/program perform once they have transferred? What evidence does the department have regarding the rate of employment of its graduates? How well do the graduates perform once employed?

N/A

1. **Evidence of the cost-effectiveness of the department/program**

How does the department/program characterize its cost-effectiveness? What would enhance the cost-effectiveness of the department/program? Are there considerations in the cost-effectiveness of the department/program that are unique to the discipline or its methods of instruction?

See Appendix 5, and Appendix 8.

**Section IV: Department/Program Status and Goals**

1. **List the department’s/program’s strengths, weaknesses and opportunities**

**Strengths:**

This is a low-cost department with high enrollment.

**Weaknesses:**

The **time investment** for this department for the PAR chair is enormous and growing. Law coordination is work done without a separate designated coordinator or pay. In addition to the scheduling of a pool of about two dozen adjunct instructors and about two dozen sections per academic term, in every academic term, the work involves all of the related chair functions concerning books, classrooms, keys, grades and student issues. The Law adjuncts require recruitment, training, monitoring, and mentoring. Academic integrity issues in Business Law necessitated designing a system of proctored exams for online sections, which requires constant administrative work. Business Law is scheduled in most of the Sinclair Learning Centers. Tech Prep has expanded the reach of Business Law into high schools, which has generated additional training and monitoring work. And the CJS Department has extended Business Law into local prisons, adding an additional layer of administrative complexity.

**Opportunities:**

Law courses could be developed related to many career fields, such as health care, hospitality, EMS, mental health, dental hygiene, automotive technology, and CIS. These could be designed as program electives, built into certificate programs, or offered through Workforce Development.

Public interest in legal topics presents a variety of opportunities for personal interest course offerings, such as Elder Law, Probate Planning, Veteran’s Law, and Cyber-Security. These could be especially popular at the Learning Centers.

Sinclair’s low tuition and the TAG status should allow Business Law enrollment to grow in the distance learning mode, if proctored exam issues can be adequately addressed.

1. **Describe the status of the department’s/program’s work on any issues or recommendations that surfaced in the last department review.**

n/a

1. **Based on feedback from environmental scans, community needs assessment, advisory committees, accrediting agencies, Student Services, and other sources external to the department, how well is the department responding to the (1) current and (2) emerging needs of the community? The college?**

See Opportunities, in IV. A., above.

1. **List noteworthy innovations in instruction, curriculum and student learning over the last five years**

All three courses were thoroughly redesigned in the semester conversion process. Instructional videos were produced for Business Law during this process.

1. **What are the department’s/program’s goals and rationale for expanding and improving student learning, including new courses, programs, delivery formats and locations?**

See Opportunities, in IV. A., above.

1. **What are the department’s goals and rationale for reallocating resources? Discontinuing courses?**

None planned.

1. **What resources and other assistance are needed to accomplish the department’s/program’s goals?**

Workforce Development, Marketing, and Distance Learning could all be involved in growth of the Law Department, if that is an institutional goal.

**Section V: Appendices: Supporting Documentation**

**Department/Program Review**

**Self-Study Report Template**

**2012 - 2013**

**Department: Law, Paralegal, Real Estate**

**Program: Real Estate**

**Section I: Overview of Department**

1. **Mission of the department and its programs(s)**

What is the purpose of the department and its programs? What publics does the department serve through its instructional programs? What positive changes in students, the community and/or disciplines/professions is the department striving to effect?

The mission of the program is to prepare students for careers in real estate with an emphasis on satisfying the criteria to become a Real Estate Sales Agent and passing the Ohio Real Estate Sales Agent exam.

The program serves residents of Ohio but mostly students within commuting distance. Sinclair is an approved Real Estate Pre-License Education Provider (see appendix for other approved institutions).

1. **Description of the self-study process**

Briefly describe the process the department followed to examine its status and prepare for this review. What were the strengths of the process, and what would the department do differently in its next five-year review?

The program coordinator reviewed datasets, course outcomes and researched the real estate industry. January 2012, Martha Taylor, Associate Professor, Computer Information Systems, became the program coordinator for Real Estate. She receives release time to coordinate the program. Prior to her appointment, the program was coordinated by an adjunct.

Martha Taylor is a member of the Dayton Area Board of Realtors, a former rental property owner, a partner in a real estate LLC and is licensed in the State of Ohio as a Realtor. Shortly after becoming the coordinator, she joined the Real Estate Educators Association and the Women’s Council of Realtors. She has attended continuing education courses at the Dayton Area Board of Realtors, a 3 day conference for educators in Kentucky, and a full day conference in Cincinnati on using technology to sell real estate and market real estate services.

The review of the program was very insightful since several areas of curriculum need to be updated and processes need to be put in place to continuously review the curriculum and the quality of the program.

By the time of the next review, the coordinator will have had a chance to set up a system to collect and analyze data in regards to student success, employment of students, and how each course assesses whether students have mastered the course and general education competencies/outcomes.

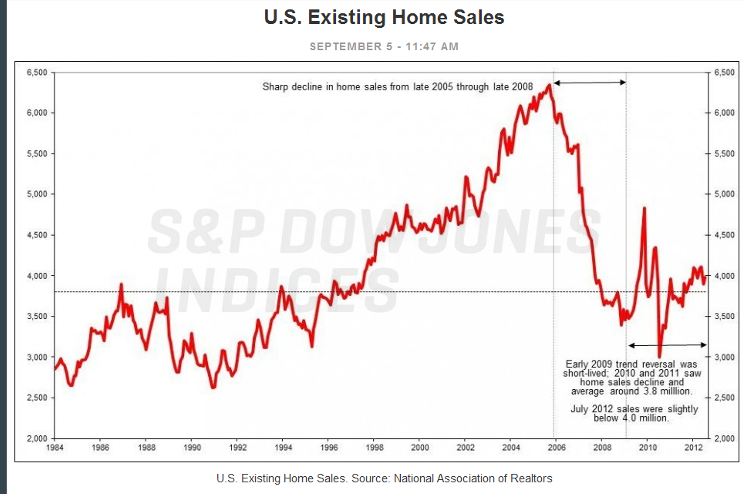
**Section II: Overview of Program**

1. **Analysis of environmental factors**

This analysis, initially developed in a collaborative meeting between the Director of Curriculum and Assessment and the department chairperson, provides important background on the environmental factors surrounding the program. Department chairpersons and faculty members have an opportunity to revise and refine the analysis as part of the self-study process.

The housing market has suffered greatly from the recession, tight credit, and questionable lending practices. The enrollment in the department and interest in the real estate program has mirrored the industry. Sales peaked in 2006 as did our enrollment. The number of students graduating did not peak until 2007. The good news is home values are rising, the housing market is recovering, and inventories are very low. (BusinessWeek December 10, 2012, Realtor Magazine, January, 15, 2012).

In 2005, there were 14,618 single family homes sold in the Dayton area. That number decreased to 10,463 in 2011. The local real estate market is improving. Local and out-of-state investors are putting their money in real estate in the Dayton market (see appendix).



According to The Bureau of Labor and Statistics the median pay for agents and brokers is $42,680 a year and mostly earned from commissions on sales. Most sales agents and brokers are self-employed (57%). The Bureau expects employment of real estate brokers and sales agents to grow 11 percent from 2010 to 2020. In 2010 there were 466,100 agents and brokers employed in the US.

Another environmental factor affecting our program is the statutes enforced by the Department of Commerce, Real Estate Division. This division is responsible for licensing Ohio’s agents and brokers, appraisers, and foreign real estate dealers and salespeople. Sinclair is an approved provider of pre-licensing courses. Each course must satisfy seat time rules. If a student misses one hour of required time they cannot pass the course and we cannot award their certificate of completion.

RES 1101 Principles and Practices - 40 hours

RES 1201 Law - 40 hours

RES 9203 Finance - 20 hours

RES 9204 Appraisal - 20 hours

Sinclair’s program competes with several for-profit colleges, notably Hondros College (see appendix for list of approved providers). The coordinator attended a national meeting of real estate educators in August and met representatives from public colleges, private for-profit colleges and training centers, regulatory agencies, and curriculum providers and consultants. Private institutions and companies are financially successful by providing pre- licensing courses and continuing education credits. They are nimble and good at marketing and can quickly revise their curriculum in order to stay current with the latest trends in real estate.

1. **Statement of program learning outcomes and linkage to courses**

Include the program outcomes for each program(s) in Section V.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1) Real Estate Skills** |  |
| Real Estate Skills | ACC 1220 - Introduction to Managerial Accounting ACC 1210 - Introduction to Financial Accounting ECO 2180 - Principles of Microeconomics MAT 1120 - Business Math PLS 1120 - American Federal Government RES 1101 - Real Estate Principles RES 1102 - Real Estate Abstracting RES 2301 - Real Estate Finance & Appraisal PLS 1232 - State & Local Government PSY 1100 - General Psychology LAW 1101 - Business Law  SOC 1145 - Introduction to Cultural Anthropology |
| **2) Communication & Technology** |  |
| Demonstrate correct and appropriate use of oral and written communication, mathematics, and computer technology in real estate activities. | BIS 1410 - Business Software Applications COM 2206 - Interpersonal Communication ENG 1131 - Business Communications RES 1101 - Real Estate Principles RES 2301 - Real Estate Finance & Appraisal RES 2302 - Real Estate Investing & Property Management ENG 1101 - English Composition I |
| **3) Real Estate Ethics** |  |
| Exemplify a high standard of ethics as a real estate professional. | RES 1201 - Real Estate Law RES 2401 - Real Estate Capstone |

1. **Admission requirements**

List any admission requirements specific to the department/program. How well have these requirements served the goals of the department/program? Are any changes in these requirements anticipated? If so, what is the rationale for these changes?

None

**Section III: Student Learning**

1. **Evidence of student mastery of general education competencies**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in general education competencies? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying general education competencies in the program?

These general education competencies have not been monitored or studied.

1. **Evidence of student achievement in the learning outcomes for the program**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in the learning outcomes for the program? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying the learning outcomes? Based on the department’s self-study, are there any planned changes in program learning outcomes?

Overall the program has been successful in students achieving the learning outcomes. The program coordinator will be working with the faculty (all adjuncts) to ensure the learning outcomes are being consistently assessed and documented for future program reviews.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Academic Year 2011-2012 |  |  | Academic Year 2005-2006 |  |  |
|  | **Success Seat Count** | **Success and Non Success Count** | **Success Rate** | **Success Seat Count** | **Success and Non Success Count** | **Success Rate** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **RES−121** |  |  |  | 22 | 30 | 73% |
| **RES−122** | 13 | 14 | 93% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| **RES−201** | 66 | 78 | 85% | 225 | 276 | 82% |
| **RES−202** | 58 | 70 | 83% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| **RES−203** | 71 | 81 | 88% | 214 | 249 | 86% |
| **RES−204** | 66 | 69 | 96% | 208 | 217 | 96% |
| **RES−205** | 0 | 0 | 0% | 209 | 220 | 95% |
| **RES−210** | 0 | 0 | 0% | 10 | 10 | 100% |
| **RES−215** | 12 | 20 | 60% | 6 | 6 | 100% |
| **RES−221** | 10 | 13 | 77% | 25 | 42 | 60% |
| **RES−278** | 9 | 10 | 90% | 29 | 35 | 83% |
| **RES−297** | 0 | 0 | 0% | 7 | 7 | 100% |
|  | 305 | 355 | 86% | 955 | 1092 | 87% |

1. **Evidence of student demand for the program**

How has/is student demand for the program changing? Why? Should the department take steps to increase the demand? Decrease the demand? Eliminate the program? What is the likely future demand for this program and why?

While the demand has decreased since 2005, the coordinator is confident that enrollments numbers will increase as the housing industry recovers. During the summer of 2013 the degree will be revised to include 3 tracks: sales (agent), investing, and property management. In addition once the state approves the online delivery of the pre-licensing courses then Sinclair will be able to expand the student base to include the entire state.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 05/FA | 06/FA | 07/FA | 08/FA | 09/FA | 10/FA | 11/FA | 12/FA |
|  | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct |
| RES.AAS-REAL ESTATE/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT-AAS | 139 | 149 | 136 | 108 | 97 | 92 | 95 | 18 |
| RES.S.AAS−REAL ESTATE/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT−AAS | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 61 |
| RESB.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE BROKER−STC | 2 | 2 | 162 | 80 | 60 | 41 | 28 | 9 |
| RESS.S.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE SALES ASSOCIATE−STC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| RESS.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE SALES ASSOCIATE−STC | 6 | 8 | 169 | 139 | 149 | 155 | 118 | 48 |
|  | 147 | 159 | 467 | 327 | 306 | 288 | 241 | 148 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Degree completion | AC2005− 06 | AC2006− 07 | AC2007− 08 | AC2008− 09 | AC2009− 10 | AC2010− 11 | AC2011− 12 |  |
| RES.AAS−REAL ESTATE/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT−AAS | 5 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 6 | 5 |  |
| RESB.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE BROKER−STC | 1 | 0 | 14 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 3 |  |
| RESS.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE SALES ASSOCIATE−STC | 0 | 2 | 288 | 134 | 92 | 86 | 63 |  |
|  | 6 | 10 | 306 | 150 | 106 | 99 | 71 |  |

1. **Evidence of program quality from external sources (e.g., advisory committees, accrediting agencies, etc.)**

What evidence does the department have about evaluations or perceptions of department/program quality from sources outside the department? In addition to off-campus sources, include perceptions of quality by other departments/programs on campus where those departments are consumers of the instruction offered by the department.

* The Real Estate program has an advisory committee which meets each term. The advisors review curriculum, discuss the current economic environment, and career areas in real estate.
* The Dayton Area Board of Realtors continues to promote Sinclair’s pre-licensing classes.

**E. Evidence of the placement/transfer of graduates**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding the extent to which its students transfer to other institutions? How well do students from the department/program perform once they have transferred? What evidence does the department have regarding the rate of employment of its graduates? How well do the graduates perform once employed?

Not available at this time.

**F. Evidence of the cost-effectiveness of the department/program**

How does the department/program characterize its cost-effectiveness? What would enhance the cost-effectiveness of the department/program? Are there considerations in the cost-effectiveness of the department/program that are unique to the discipline or its methods of instruction?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2007-2008 | 2011-2012 | FY 08-FY12 Change |
| FTE | 67.3 | 43.0 | -24.3 |
| Revenue per FTE | $4,899 | $4,791 | -.06% |
| Cost per FTE | $2,785 | $4,024 | 9.6% |
| Faculty Ratio per Full-time faculty | 3.1% | 0 | -3.1% |

**Section IV: Department/Program Status and Goals**

1. **List the department’s/program’s strengths, weaknesses and opportunities**

**Strengths**

* The program offers an accredited degree.
* The classes are taught by dedicated instructors who are successful realtors or experts in their area.
* Our student population is diverse. Fall 2012, 56 of our 132 students were Black or African American.

**Weaknesses**

* The housing industry affects our enrollment numbers
* We are also in competition with for-profit schools, Hondros College, and other community colleges (See appendix)
* We do not have any funds to advertise our program.

**Opportunities**

* To restructure the degree to include tracks in sales (agents), investment, and property management. This should even out the cyclical nature of demand for our classes.
* To become a continuing education provider. Realtors need to complete 30 hours of continuing education every 3 years.
* To provide quality courses that provide students with the tools they need to be successful in real estate.
* Once the Department of Commerce Real Estate Division approves the online delivery of the pre-licensing courses, we will be one of the most cost effective providers in the state.
* Create articulation agreements with universities for either bachelor in business or real estate (minimum level of education for those who become a certified appraiser beginning in 2015).
* The Advisory Committee is going to be dissolved after the spring 2013 meeting and will be reformed for fall 2013. The new committee will include with 1 academic advisor, 2 members from county/city governments, 2 members from the real estate investing area, 2 brokers, 2 sales agents, 2 members from mortgage /financial institutes and 2 members from the Dayton Area Board of Realtors.

1. **Describe the status of the department’s/program’s work on any issues or recommendations that surfaced in the last department review.**

No prior department/program review has been located.

1. **Based on feedback from environmental scans, community needs assessment, advisory committees, accrediting agencies, Student Services, and other sources external to the department, how well is the department responding to the (1) current and (2) emerging needs of the community? The college?**

* The degree will be redesigned to emphasize different careers in real estate.
* Short term certificates will be added to focus on skills sets needed to be successful in real estate.
* Digital marketing is being added to the spring 2013 capstone.
* The coordinator is researching adding a social media/digital marketing class to the program.
* The coordinator is working with Ohio University on a degree completion program.
* Faculty online developers have been trained and are ready to work with the Distance Learning & Instructional Support Department to develop the online pre-licensing courses.
* Sales Fundamentals (Marketing 2225) was added to the degree and Human Resource Management was removed.

1. **List noteworthy innovations in instruction, curriculum and student learning over the last five years**

The Real Estate capstone class added service learning to the capstone class: City of Dayton Neighborhood organizations, Miami Valley Fair Housing Center, Citywide Development, and Downtown Dayton Partnership.

1. **What are the department’s/program’s goals and rationale for expanding and improving student learning, including new courses, programs, delivery formats and locations?**

* Increase the number of courses which are delivered online.
* Add course material on social media and digital marketing.
* Add 2 short term certificates: investing and property management.
* Add a speaker series to promote the program to the community.
* Offer the investment and property management courses at Courseview and Preble County.

1. **What are the department’s goals and rationale for reallocating resources? Discontinuing courses?**

* There is no need to discontinue any courses.
* Real Estate Brokers short term certificate was not converted to semesters. This decision was based on the recommendations from the Advisory Committee.

1. **What resources and other assistance are needed to accomplish the department’s/program’s goals?**

The program would benefit from additional advertising dollars. Our only means of advertising is the Dayton Area Board of Realtors.

**Section V: Appendices: Supporting Documentation**

**Department/Program Review**

**Self-Study Report Template**

**2011 - 2012**

**Department: Law, Paralegal, Real Estate**

**Program: Real Estate**

**Section I: Overview of Department**

1. **Mission of the department and its programs(s)**

What is the purpose of the department and its programs? What publics does the department serve through its instructional programs? What positive changes in students, the community and/or disciplines/professions is the department striving to effect?

The mission of the program is to prepare students for careers in real estate with an emphasis on satisfying the criteria to become a Real Estate Sales Agent and passing the Ohio Real Estate Sales Agent exam.

The program serves residents of Ohio but mostly students within commuting distance. Sinclair is an approved Real Estate Pre-License Education Provider (see appendix for other approved institutions).

1. **Description of the self-study process**

Briefly describe the process the department followed to examine its status and prepare for this review. What were the strengths of the process, and what would the department do differently in its next five-year review?

The program coordinator reviewed datasets, course outcomes and researched the real estate industry. January 2012, Martha Taylor, Associate Professor, Computer Information Systems, became the program coordinator for Real Estate. She receives release time to coordinate the program. Prior to her appointment, the program was coordinated by an adjunct.

Martha Taylor is a member of the Dayton Area Board of Realtors, a former rental property owner, a partner in a real estate LLC and is licensed in the State of Ohio as a Realtor. Shortly after becoming the coordinator, she joined the Real Estate Educators Association and the Women’s Council of Realtors. She has attended continuing education courses at the Dayton Area Board of Realtors, a 3 day conference for educators in Kentucky, and a full day conference in Cincinnati on using technology to sell real estate and market real estate services.

The review of the program was very insightful since several areas of curriculum need to be updated and processes need to be put in place to continuously review the curriculum and the quality of the program.

By the time of the next review, the coordinator will have had a chance to set up a system to collect and analyze data in regards to student success, employment of students, and how each course assesses whether students have mastered the course and general education competencies/outcomes.

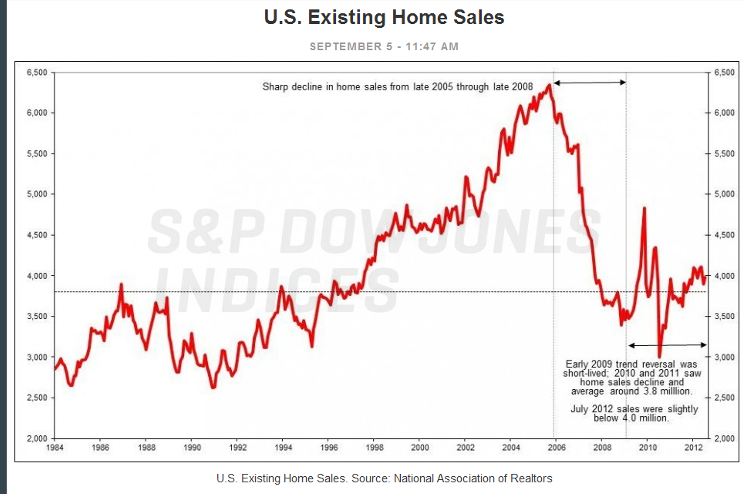
**Section II: Overview of Program**

1. **Analysis of environmental factors**

This analysis, initially developed in a collaborative meeting between the Director of Curriculum and Assessment and the department chairperson, provides important background on the environmental factors surrounding the program. Department chairpersons and faculty members have an opportunity to revise and refine the analysis as part of the self-study process.

The housing market has suffered greatly from the recession, tight credit, and questionable lending practices. The enrollment in the department and interest in the real estate program has mirrored the industry. Sales peaked in 2006 as did our enrollment. The number of students graduating did not peak until 2007. The good news is home values are rising, the housing market is recovering, and inventories are very low. (BusinessWeek December 10, 2012, Realtor Magazine, January, 15, 2012).

In 2005, there were 14,618 single family homes sold in the Dayton area. That number decreased to 10,463 in 2011. The local real estate market is improving. Local and out-of-state investors are putting their money in real estate in the Dayton market (see appendix).



According to The Bureau of Labor and Statistics the median pay for agents and brokers is $42,680 a year and mostly earned from commissions on sales. Most sales agents and brokers are self-employed (57%). The Bureau expects employment of real estate brokers and sales agents to grow 11 percent from 2010 to 2020. In 2010 there were 466,100 agents and brokers employed in the US.

Another environmental factor affecting our program is the statutes enforced by the Department of Commerce, Real Estate Division. This division is responsible for licensing Ohio’s agents and brokers, appraisers, and foreign real estate dealers and salespeople. Sinclair is an approved provider of pre-licensing courses. Each course must satisfy seat time rules. If a student misses one hour of required time they cannot pass the course and we cannot award their certificate of completion.

RES 1101 Principles and Practices - 40 hours

RES 1201 Law - 40 hours

RES 9203 Finance - 20 hours

RES 9204 Appraisal - 20 hours

Sinclair’s program competes with several for-profit colleges, notably Hondros College (see appendix for list of approved providers). The coordinator attended a national meeting of real estate educators in August and met representatives from public colleges, private for-profit colleges and training centers, regulatory agencies, and curriculum providers and consultants. Private institutions and companies are financially successful by providing pre- licensing courses and continuing education credits. They are nimble and good at marketing and can quickly revise their curriculum in order to stay current with the latest trends in real estate.

1. **Statement of program learning outcomes and linkage to courses**

Include the program outcomes for each program(s) in Section V.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1) Real Estate Skills** |  |
| Real Estate Skills | ACC 1220 - Introduction to Managerial Accounting ACC 1210 - Introduction to Financial Accounting ECO 2180 - Principles of Microeconomics MAT 1120 - Business Math PLS 1120 - American Federal Government RES 1101 - Real Estate Principles RES 1102 - Real Estate Abstracting RES 2301 - Real Estate Finance & Appraisal PLS 1232 - State & Local Government PSY 1100 - General Psychology LAW 1101 - Business Law  SOC 1145 - Introduction to Cultural Anthropology |
| **2) Communication & Technology** |  |
| Demonstrate correct and appropriate use of oral and written communication, mathematics, and computer technology in real estate activities. | BIS 1410 - Business Software Applications COM 2206 - Interpersonal Communication ENG 1131 - Business Communications RES 1101 - Real Estate Principles RES 2301 - Real Estate Finance & Appraisal RES 2302 - Real Estate Investing & Property Management ENG 1101 - English Composition I |
| **3) Real Estate Ethics** |  |
| Exemplify a high standard of ethics as a real estate professional. | RES 1201 - Real Estate Law RES 2401 - Real Estate Capstone |

1. **Admission requirements**

List any admission requirements specific to the department/program. How well have these requirements served the goals of the department/program? Are any changes in these requirements anticipated? If so, what is the rationale for these changes?

None

**Section III: Student Learning**

1. **Evidence of student mastery of general education competencies**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in general education competencies? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying general education competencies in the program?

These general education competencies have not been monitored or studied.

1. **Evidence of student achievement in the learning outcomes for the program**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding students’ proficiency in the learning outcomes for the program? Based on this evidence, how well are students mastering and applying the learning outcomes? Based on the department’s self-study, are there any planned changes in program learning outcomes?

Overall the program has been successful in students achieving the learning outcomes. The program coordinator will be working with the faculty (all adjuncts) to ensure the learning outcomes are being consistently assessed and documented for future program reviews.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Academic Year 2011-2012 |  |  | Academic Year 2005-2006 |  |  |
|  | **Success Seat Count** | **Success and Non Success Count** | **Success Rate** | **Success Seat Count** | **Success and Non Success Count** | **Success Rate** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **RES−121** |  |  |  | 22 | 30 | 73% |
| **RES−122** | 13 | 14 | 93% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| **RES−201** | 66 | 78 | 85% | 225 | 276 | 82% |
| **RES−202** | 58 | 70 | 83% | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| **RES−203** | 71 | 81 | 88% | 214 | 249 | 86% |
| **RES−204** | 66 | 69 | 96% | 208 | 217 | 96% |
| **RES−205** | 0 | 0 | 0% | 209 | 220 | 95% |
| **RES−210** | 0 | 0 | 0% | 10 | 10 | 100% |
| **RES−215** | 12 | 20 | 60% | 6 | 6 | 100% |
| **RES−221** | 10 | 13 | 77% | 25 | 42 | 60% |
| **RES−278** | 9 | 10 | 90% | 29 | 35 | 83% |
| **RES−297** | 0 | 0 | 0% | 7 | 7 | 100% |
|  | 305 | 355 | 86% | 955 | 1092 | 87% |

1. **Evidence of student demand for the program**

How has/is student demand for the program changing? Why? Should the department take steps to increase the demand? Decrease the demand? Eliminate the program? What is the likely future demand for this program and why?

While the demand has decreased since 2005, the coordinator is confident that enrollments numbers will increase as the housing industry recovers. During the summer of 2013 the degree will be revised to include 3 tracks: sales (agent), investing, and property management. In addition once the state approves the online delivery of the pre-licensing courses then Sinclair will be able to expand the student base to include the entire state.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 05/FA | 06/FA | 07/FA | 08/FA | 09/FA | 10/FA | 11/FA | 12/FA |
|  | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct | Stu−Prog Ct |
| RES.AAS-REAL ESTATE/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT-AAS | 139 | 149 | 136 | 108 | 97 | 92 | 95 | 18 |
| RES.S.AAS−REAL ESTATE/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT−AAS | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 61 |
| RESB.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE BROKER−STC | 2 | 2 | 162 | 80 | 60 | 41 | 28 | 9 |
| RESS.S.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE SALES ASSOCIATE−STC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| RESS.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE SALES ASSOCIATE−STC | 6 | 8 | 169 | 139 | 149 | 155 | 118 | 48 |
|  | 147 | 159 | 467 | 327 | 306 | 288 | 241 | 148 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Degree completion | AC2005− 06 | AC2006− 07 | AC2007− 08 | AC2008− 09 | AC2009− 10 | AC2010− 11 | AC2011− 12 |  |
| RES.AAS−REAL ESTATE/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT−AAS | 5 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 6 | 5 |  |
| RESB.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE BROKER−STC | 1 | 0 | 14 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 3 |  |
| RESS.STC−OHIO REAL ESTATE SALES ASSOCIATE−STC | 0 | 2 | 288 | 134 | 92 | 86 | 63 |  |
|  | 6 | 10 | 306 | 150 | 106 | 99 | 71 |  |

1. **Evidence of program quality from external sources (e.g., advisory committees, accrediting agencies, etc.)**

What evidence does the department have about evaluations or perceptions of department/program quality from sources outside the department? In addition to off-campus sources, include perceptions of quality by other departments/programs on campus where those departments are consumers of the instruction offered by the department.

* The Real Estate program has an advisory committee which meets each term. The advisors review curriculum, discuss the current economic environment, and career areas in real estate.
* The Dayton Area Board of Realtors continues to promote Sinclair’s pre-licensing classes.

**E. Evidence of the placement/transfer of graduates**

What evidence does the department/program have regarding the extent to which its students transfer to other institutions? How well do students from the department/program perform once they have transferred? What evidence does the department have regarding the rate of employment of its graduates? How well do the graduates perform once employed?

Not available at this time.

**F. Evidence of the cost-effectiveness of the department/program**

How does the department/program characterize its cost-effectiveness? What would enhance the cost-effectiveness of the department/program? Are there considerations in the cost-effectiveness of the department/program that are unique to the discipline or its methods of instruction?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2007-2008 | 2011-2012 | FY 08-FY12 Change |
| FTE | 67.3 | 43.0 | -24.3 |
| Revenue per FTE | $4,899 | $4,791 | -.06% |
| Cost per FTE | $2,785 | $4,024 | 9.6% |
| Faculty Ratio per Full-time faculty | 3.1% | 0 | -3.1% |

**Section IV: Department/Program Status and Goals**

1. **List the department’s/program’s strengths, weaknesses and opportunities**

**Strengths**

* The program offers an accredited degree.
* The classes are taught by dedicated instructors who are successful realtors or experts in their area.
* Our student population is diverse. Fall 2012, 56 of our 132 students were Black or African American.

**Weaknesses**

* The housing industry affects our enrollment numbers
* We are also in competition with for-profit schools, Hondros College, and other community colleges (See appendix)
* We do not have any funds to advertise our program.

**Opportunities**

* To restructure the degree to include tracks in sales (agents), investment, and property management. This should even out the cyclical nature of demand for our classes.
* To become a continuing education provider. Realtors need to complete 30 hours of continuing education every 3 years.
* To provide quality courses that provide students with the tools they need to be successful in real estate.
* Once the Department of Commerce Real Estate Division approves the online delivery of the pre-licensing courses, we will be one of the most cost effective providers in the state.
* Create articulation agreements with universities for either bachelor in business or real estate (minimum level of education for those who become a certified appraiser beginning in 2015).
* The Advisory Committee is going to be dissolved after the spring 2013 meeting and will be reformed for fall 2013. The new committee will include with 1 academic advisor, 2 members from county/city governments, 2 members from the real estate investing area, 2 brokers, 2 sales agents, 2 members from mortgage /financial institutes and 2 members from the Dayton Area Board of Realtors.

1. **Describe the status of the department’s/program’s work on any issues or recommendations that surfaced in the last department review.**

No prior department/program review has been located.

1. **Based on feedback from environmental scans, community needs assessment, advisory committees, accrediting agencies, Student Services, and other sources external to the department, how well is the department responding to the (1) current and (2) emerging needs of the community? The college?**

* The degree will be redesigned to emphasize different careers in real estate.
* Short term certificates will be added to focus on skills sets needed to be successful in real estate.
* Digital marketing is being added to the spring 2013 capstone.
* The coordinator is researching adding a social media/digital marketing class to the program.
* The coordinator is working with Ohio University on a degree completion program.
* Faculty online developers have been trained and are ready to work with the Distance Learning & Instructional Support Department to develop the online pre-licensing courses.
* Sales Fundamentals (Marketing 2225) was added to the degree and Human Resource Management was removed.

1. **List noteworthy innovations in instruction, curriculum and student learning over the last five years**

The Real Estate capstone class added service learning to the capstone class: City of Dayton Neighborhood organizations, Miami Valley Fair Housing Center, Citywide Development, and Downtown Dayton Partnership.

1. **What are the department’s/program’s goals and rationale for expanding and improving student learning, including new courses, programs, delivery formats and locations?**

* Increase the number of courses which are delivered online.
* Add course material on social media and digital marketing.
* Add 2 short term certificates: investing and property management.
* Add a speaker series to promote the program to the community.
* Offer the investment and property management courses at Courseview and Preble County.

1. **What are the department’s goals and rationale for reallocating resources? Discontinuing courses?**

* There is no need to discontinue any courses.
* Real Estate Brokers short term certificate was not converted to semesters. This decision was based on the recommendations from the Advisory Committee.

1. **What resources and other assistance are needed to accomplish the department’s/program’s goals?**

The program would benefit from additional advertising dollars. Our only means of advertising is the Dayton Area Board of Realtors.

**Section V: Appendices: Supporting Documentation**