**Department/Program Review Summary**

**2011-12**

**Department:** Operations Technology (OPT)

**Date of Review:** May 4, 2012

**Review Team Members and Titles:**

Helen Grove, Sr. Vice President and Provost

David Bodary, Professor, Communication

Cynthia Cully, Professor, Design

Jared Cutler, Director, Curriculum and Assessment

Chuck Edmonson, University of Dayton, Professor of Industrial Engineering Technology

Bahar Hartmann, Associate Professor, Modern Languages

Karl Konsdorf, Manager, Research Analytics & Reporting

Cole Rodesky, Advisor, Academic Advising

Dani Stoll, Director, Admissions/ Recruitment

Melissa Tolle, Assistant Director, Senior Vice President’s Office

John Weaver, Chair, Humanities, Government & Modern Languages,

Lori Zakel, Dean, Liberal Arts, Communication and Social Sciences

**Department Members Present:**

Roger Abernathy, Dean, Science, Math and Engineering

Charlie Winarchick, Chair, Operations Technology

Faculty:

Shep Anderson

Dave Meyer

Lynn Seery

**Commendations**:

* The TAC/ABET accreditation that this department has maintained is impressive – this is one of only 12 institutions nationally that is accredited by TAC/ABET for Industrial Engineering programs. This attests to the quality and uniqueness of this department, and it has earned a strong commendation for this.
* The department has been proactive in its response to enrollment declines, taking action to inform high school students of opportunities in the field and taking other measures to increase its recruitment efforts.
* Certificates in this department feed into degree programs – this stackable approach to credentialing is commendable and has a number of benefits for students, including the earning of multiple credentials in the course of earning an associate degree and a great chance of credentialing for those students who are unable to complete a degree program.
* The “Hear See Do” approach that is taken in courses in this department is particularly impressive, and is no doubt a contributing factor to the generally high success rates for courses in this department.
* Another commendable practice of the department is the extensive use of rubrics to assess student achievement on course assignments.
* The department has maintained strong connections with employers, with four-year institutions (particularly the University of Dayton), and with former students. This enables the department to be aware of external stakeholder needs and to determine how well it is preparing its graduates for employment or additional education.
* Particular mention should be made of the use of graduate exit interviews, which serves as a valuable source of feedback to the department.
* This is a department that is making growing use of its Advisory Committee. The pairing of students with Advisory Committee members in recruitment efforts is particularly impressive.
* The department has been a key player in the institution’s work with displaced workers.

**Recommendations for Action**:

* Currently the semester curriculum in programs in this department are at the maximum of 73 credit hours and well above the 60 credit hours that would constitute a two-year, full-time program. The department should consider scaling back the program requirements where appropriate to facilitate completion of the degree program by students. This work, of course, should take into careful consideration how to offer a strong program without compromising quality of student learning and their professional preparedness.
* The department is encouraged to enhance its assessment of program outcomes. The department has considerable professional expertise in continuous quality improvement and thus could serve as a model for other departments on the collection of data on student learning outcomes, the analysis of this data, and the use of results to further improve the quality of student learning. While anecdotal information from students is a valued qualitative source of information about students’ experience in OPT, there is a need for a much more focused and systematic approach to evidence of student learning outcomes, an issue also cited in the TAC/ABET review.
* The department is encouraged to explore options to allow students the ability to maintain employment while working to complete their degree programs. Flexibility in scheduling may be called for to make this a reality for some of our students in these programs who also work full-time.
* The department has recognized the need to educate students on the opportunities in the field and to combat the misperceptions that there are no jobs in manufacturing. The department is encouraged to explore the use of institutional resources in getting this message out, which may include Marketing, Career Services, and other areas in the institution. It may be a good idea to develop talking points about the program that could be shared in different venues as a means of attracting students to the OPT programs.
* Similarly, the department should work to increase its profile on campus. The department’s expertise in continuous quality improvement could be applied to a number of campus processes, and such opportunities could provide students with practical experience and also raise the department’s profile on campus.
* The high success rates in OPT courses indicate that the department is doing some things that are extremely effective – how can these things be shared and replicated in other departments? The department is encouraged to explore approaches to sharing the techniques that are working so well for them with other departments, perhaps through workshops or Fall Faculty Professional Development Day.
* The self-study submitted for this review focused on TAC/ABET general education outcomes. Accreditation requirements are crucial, and the department needs to be able to demonstrate it is meeting the TAC/ABET general education assessment requirements, but Sinclair’s General Education outcomes also must be met. The department is encouraged to explicitly map out the relationships between TAC/ABET and Sinclair general education outcomes and ensure that they are addressing both in their assessment efforts.
* The department’s mission statement should be revised to be more crisp, concise, and focused. Communicating more clearly the purpose and expertise of the department can be valuable in promoting wider understanding on campus and off of the expertise and programs of the department.
* The department is encouraged to work with RAR to increase the data it has on graduates and industry trends. Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services data can provide information on graduate employment and earnings, and Career Coach data can provide information on industry trends. RAR is an excellent resource in accessing both of these sources of data.
* The department is benefitting from its work with its Advisory Committee, and it is encouraged to keep the committee fresh, replacing inactive members as the need arises.
* Finally, the department is encouraged to increase the diversity of faculty and students.

**Overall Assessment of Department’s Progress and Goals**:

The department exhibits a high level of commitment and dedication – it is evident that department members reflect a great deal of care and concern for students. Moreover, it has implemented practices that have proven to be beneficial to student success in its courses (the “Hear See Do” approach), and that should be shared with other departments across campus. This department has much to offer other departments, and it may be that the process improvement abilities of the OPT department are underutilized by other entities in the institution.

The department needs to substantially expand the depth and sophistication of the assessment of student learning outcomes. The Director of Curriculum and Assessment and the division’s Learning Liaison can serve as helpful resources in this process, working with the department to apply its CQI expertise to student learning in the department’s courses and programs.

**Institutional or Resource Barriers to the Department’s Ability to accomplish its Goals, if any**:

The department appears to be keenly aware of the challenges it faces in enrollment and recruitment including widely held misperceptions that manufacturing in this region is no longer viable. The department needs assistance from the college’s Admissions and Marketing Departments to promote its programs and the jobs available for graduates of OPT certificate and degree programs.