Academic Extension
Program Review Response

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General Comments

The 2013-14 academic year program review cycle was the first review process of this kind for Academic Extension (AE). The effort resulted in many valuable artifacts, including:

- The Self-Study document that serves as convenient orientation tool for new employees, academic partners, administrators, etc.
- Confirmation of strengths of current staffing.
- Enhanced understanding of AE's internal organizational structures, informing short-term decisions about areas in need of additional staffing.
- Documentation of forces converging at this point in time across UO and the broader region that mark this time of transition, including desire for broader UO leadership in shaping the role of AE within UO.

External Review Committee

The External Review Committee phase took place over two months in spring 2014. The site visit took place April 16-18, 2014. There was general consensus by staff and review committee that the format was efficient and effective.

The committee's report is embedded, in its entirety, into this document to provide a single summary of both the committee's observations and the AE Interim Co-Directors' responses.

We, the AE Interim Co-Directors, appreciate the expertise demonstrated by the committee members, and the depth of understanding they shared as professional colleagues in related areas of their respective institutions. At the same time, we acknowledge that “academic extension” encompasses a very broad array of functions and varies greatly from one institution to another, making it nearly impossible to fully contextualize recommendations based on such a brief time of review.
Observations of the Current State of Academic Extension

The observations described on page 1 of the External Review Committee report are consistent with our views.

We are proud of our current staff and relationships with both academic leaders and faculty. It was rewarding that our shared leadership, and individual strengths, were recognized.
General Observations

To the extent that AE in some areas appears to “lack” coherence or definable scope, we assert that this is the result of viable and appropriate responsiveness to the diverse needs of our academic units.

Conference Services

Conference Services is an integral component of Academic Extension, serving campus groups and extending services to affiliated organizations nationally, providing University exposure, creating opportunity for student involvement, and critically, generating revenues in support of high-risk Continuing Education programming.

Budget

Budget protection, as noted, is not currently at issue, due to carefully managed program resources and maintenance of the AE program investment pool. The recommendation to provide incentives for program development and provide returns to the Colleges coincides with current planning in AE.

The tuition differential needs to be reviewed. The change of institutional governance, away from an Oregon University System model to an independent governing board, will likely lead to explorations in the next two years of policies, practices, and operations; this could develop new systems regarding tuition models.
Leadership

While AE has been challenged in the past by a "lack of significant participation in higher academic conversations on campus," progress is well underway to expand AE’s integration through the leadership of the Senior Vice Provost, AE staff participation in key committees, AE’s new program outreach initiatives, and direct engagement from the Interim Co-Directors with multiple offices across campus.

Examples of current such activities in AY 13-14 include:

- **AE’s Summer Request For Proposals** resulted in 10 program proposals and launching or enhancing 4 projects
  - Summer Sports Law Institute, in Eugene
  - LERC workshops in Climate Change regulations
  - NILI online complement to language preservation and teaching methods
  - Mobilizing Local Culture, institute/graduate course, AAD in Portland
- **AE collaboration with UO Libraries** to create Instructional Technology Referral Office (InTRO), providing a resource to all UO faculty to navigate decentralized resources for technology-enhanced education
- **Sandra Gladney** participating in various campus committees including the Intellectual Property committee for implementation of CBA
- **Sandra Gladney** proactively connecting with various institutional leaders to explore goals of the respective offices and the role for Academic Extension, e.g. Roger Thompson, Enrollment; Andy Berglund, Graduate School
- **Rejoining Education Advisory Board, Continuing and Online Education forum**
- **Expansion of AE participation** in key professional associations, such as University Professional and Continuing Education Association, and its new sub group for Summit of Online Leaders

Suggestions for future directions

Academic Extension’s strength in its staff, programs and infrastructure can be leveraged to make significant future contributions to the University of Oregon and its various constituents. In the sections below we offer some suggestions that we believe will help AE make those contributions. Some of these are drawn from AE’s “Big Ideas” section found in the program review self-study.
Suggestions for future directions

Leadership

Though the Co-Directors have met with considerable success driving Academic Extension forward, and have experienced a partnership of great strength and mutual support, nonetheless, the Co-Directors are anticipating the selection of an Executive Director or Dean.

As a best possible outcome of the External Review, the hope is that Sandra Gladney be more fully recognized at all levels of the University for leadership and experience, and either be appointed the leadership role in Academic Extension, or should a new search ensue, be regarded as an extremely strong candidate.

Online

AE does not seek to have the lead role for the enterprise-wide Learning Management System. There was discussion of the potential to manage a secondary LMS for non-credit activity if the implementation of the new enterprise-wide system, having the priority of serving credit-based course integration, does not prove to be fully functional for non-credit needs.

AE is in a position to provide leadership for online education. Whether that encompasses a breadth of areas and audiences (e.g. undergraduate gen-ed, non-credit professional development, applied graduate degrees), or a particular area/audience, is yet to be clarified by institutional leadership.

The InTRO project is new and evolving, and its scope should become clearer over AY 14-15. Whether AE should “take the lead” or foster a spin-off unit remains to be determined. Factors could include new leadership in TEP, leadership of the new Dean of Libraries, and clarity about prioritization of online education and/or technology integration for campus-wide mission and strategic position.
Community Linkages

New initiatives are already in progress this academic year, including a pilot OLLI outreach in Florence through collaboration with Lane Community College. Exploratory conversations are underway with residents of Salem and other broad geographic areas, too. On the Central Oregon side of the state, AE’s administrative oversight of the Bend Center has fostered collaborative program support beyond the OLLI program site there to include shared resources with Advancement efforts at expanding community connections.

Conference Services

Given the financial health of AE at this time, moving more strongly toward serving campus needs, and subsidizing the true costs of faculty, and administrator, sponsored meetings is possible and potentially very beneficial for the University.

The Conference Services and Continuing Education divisions have thoughtfully considered which services can be integrated for maximum efficiency, such as IT infrastructure for database hardware and server system maintenance. Careful ongoing analysis of unique needs between Conference Services and Continuing Education divisions has consistently led to customized systems (e.g. registration, finance) enabling more robust systems than generally provided by third party vendor systems; for this reason we are not currently, nor do we seek to be, fully integrated.

Financial

AE traditionally accepts responsibility for high-risk programming. AE does and will continue to subsidize programs identified as strategically important given the financial resources required.
Future Recommendations

Now that a self-study model exists for AE, it can serve as a template for future review cycles.