**WKU Annual Sustainability Check-up PILOT Program** (August 23, 2021)

**Context & Overview**

The aim of the Annual Sustainability Check-up (ASC) is to quickly and efficiently identify programs that may need help to improve their long-term viability and quality. This is not an attempt to identify programs for suspension, but a proactive effort to support programs that may have different types of challenges. Working with Institutional Research, the Academic Program Review Creation Committee has developed a suite of data pages with a dashboard that reports five years’ worth of data that programs will use to analyze their programs. The committee, composed of faculty from across the university representing diverse disciplines and program sizes, spent months developing a set of metrics and thresholds that programs should meet to demonstrate their sustainability.

The committee has identified several characteristics to measure *sustainability*: # majors, # graduates, 6-year graduation rate, average annual change in majors and degrees, average student credit hour production, and % SCHP by full-time faculty. One of the strengths of this approach is that it does not simply flag programs that have significant enrollment declines, but it also identifies programs that may be short-staffed. Again, the goal is to highlight programs with specific challenges, to help them proactively take steps to improve, and to give them an opportunity to advocate for resources from their colleges.

Programs that meet or exceed the sustainability thresholds will not need to write a report although analyzing the data will be a helpful way to monitor the strength of the department. Programs that do not meet the thresholds will complete a brief report to assess their program’s sustainability and potentially make a plan to improve it with support from their colleges. Program coordinators will work with department heads to

* answer a series of questions to explain their situation and their plans to improve the sustainability of the program (if applicable);
* set goals and a timeline to meet those goals; and
* describe kinds of support (financial or otherwise) the program would need to improve and to achieve the goals.

The college dean will review the explanation and plan and provide input and determine the level of support that is available. Departments may need to amend goals based on the types and levels of support that colleges can provide. Once the program faculty, department head, and dean have come to an agreement, they will share the plan with the WKU Academic Program Review Committee and the Provost. While the APR Committee and Provost will monitor progress, deans have full authority over the programs in their colleges. Once a plan has been approved by the dean and a timeline agreed upon, the program will not be flagged until the timeline has passed, but the program will need to submit a brief annual progress report (one paragraph) to the dean and APR Committee.

**Information for Sustainability Reports**

1. Based on a review of the dashboard data, explain your interpretation of the sustainability of your program and the causes of any sustainability issues that may need to be addressed.
2. Explain your program’s effectiveness in terms of student learning and success as they impact sustainability. Consider results from Assurance of Student Learning reports, strategies you have used to improve learning, and any other relevant data/information.
3. Describe your plans to improve the program’s sustainability. Explain the specific steps that have been taken already and any future steps you will take; the measurable goals and targets that would indicate success in the short term (one year) and medium term (2-3 years); and the specific resources (financial or otherwise) needed to achieve success.

**Dean’s Office Review**

1. After receiving the report, the Dean’s Office will provide an assessment of the plan. The Dean/designee will include any reservations and/or suggestions for the program to consider and pay particular attention to financial implications. The Dean may choose to involve a college committee in the process and/or consult with the Provost as appropriate.
2. The Dean/designee will meet to review the response and iterate; the program faculty will revise the plan as needed until the Dean and program have agreed on a final plan and timeline to improve the program’s sustainability.
3. Once agreement is achieved, the program coordinator will submit a final report that the Dean will endorse and forward to the APR Committee, Provost, and (if relevant) Assoc. Provost for Graduate Education.

**Academic Program Review Committee and Provost Monitoring**

1. When the APR Committee receives the report, they will review it and make notes for the dashboard to help monitor progress (and avoid future flagging).
2. When the Provost receives the report, s/he will respond to the Dean and program if necessary.

**Proposed Timeline for Pilot:**

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| August 27 | Organizational Meeting with Hale & Helbig |
| September 24 | Programs Deliver Report to Deans |
| October 15 | Deans will have responded to programs/department heads  |
| October 28 | Reports finalized and returned to Hale |