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Program Review
Form for External Review Committee

Instructional

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Form ID
116
Division
Business
Department
Paralegal Studies
Program
Paralegal Studies
Review Year
2006-2007
Member Names
Division Overview
<u>Program/Department Purpose</u>
State the purpose of the program/department. How is this purpose within the mission of Amarillo College? Upon successful completion of this program, students will be prepared to work in a law office under the direct supervision of a practicing

attorney as a legal assistant and will have met the educational requirements to take the Certified Legal Exam. This program supports Goals I through VIII and X of the Amarillo College Mission Statement on page 6 of the Amarillo College 2006-2007 Catalog.

**Does the answer include a purpose statement for the program/department?
Does the answer indicate how this program/department is within the mission of Amarillo College?**

Unacceptable
Concern

The department purpose statement as written above reflects the Purpose Statement from the 2003-2004 PET form. The department's purpose statement was revised on the 2004-2005 PET form. Please clarify which purpose statement applies. A hyperlink to the corresponding PET form within the textual response would assist reviewer comprehension.

In addition, please clarify the direct correlation to the AC Mission Statement. In what way does the departmental purpose support the mission of the College? A more specific explanation is needed here. And, a hyperlink within the text to the AC Mission Statement and/or Strategic Plan was be

beneficial. "Additional Information" below links to both texts.

When was the last time the program's/department's purpose statement was reviewed/revised by faculty and staff in the program/department?

The paralegal programs purpose statement was reviewed following the April 4, 2005 site visit by the ABA (American Bar Association) Visiting Team. The purpose statement was last revised in October of 2004. The latest revision is what currently appears in the Amarillo College 2006-2007 catalog.

Does the answer indicate the last time the program's/department's purpose statement was reviewed/revised by faculty and staff in the program/department? Does the answer indicate how this program/department is within the mission of Amarillo College? within the mission of Amarillo College?

Unacceptable

Concern

Because this is an electronic document, any external sources should be hyperlinked. If catalog is necessary to explanation, a hyperlink should be provided. A more beneficial resource may be a link to the departmental Web site

which should include program purpose and have a date stamp. Once again, a hyperlink to the most recently updated PET form would be beneficial.

If the program/department offers continuing education credits, how are these courses consistent with the mission of Amarillo College?
Not applicable.

Does the program/department offer continuing education credits? Does the answer indicate how these courses are consistent with the mission of Amarillo College?

Acceptable

N/A

Does the program have admissions policies?
Where are the policies published?
NO ANSWER

Are all the locations where the policies are published included in the answer?

Acceptable

Concern

A statement of how the program defers to the College's general admissions policy would be appropriate here: "open" access, testing requirements, etc. A hyperlink to the Registrar's Web page would be beneficial as well as acknowledgment of any locations/documents in

which admissions policies are published.

Explain how these policies are consistent with the mission of Amarillo College.

NO ANSWER

Does the explanation of how the policies are consistent with the mission of Amarillo College appear to be accurate?

Acceptable

Concern

Related to the previous answer, this answer requires the writer acknowledge that the admission policies recognized by the department adhere to the College's mission statement.

Is the program/department accredited?

Which agencies or organizations accredit the department/program?

American Bar Association (ABA) has given its approval to the program. It does not refer to it as "accredited", but "approved".

Are the complete names of the agencies or organizations which accredit the department/program cited?

Acceptable

N/A

Congratulations on this exceptional achievement.

How many years are in the accreditation cycle?

7

How many years are in the accreditation

cycle?

Acceptable

When were the accreditations affirmed or granted?

February 2006

When were the accreditations affirmed or granted?

Acceptable

What is the current status of the accreditation?

Accredited

Are the current statuses of the accreditations identified (e.g. accredited, in process of renewal, in process of candidacy, other)?

Unacceptable

Concern

In previous answer, "accredited" is not the appropriate term applied by the ABA. Please clarify for reviewer the official term of "approved" and associated benefits and commendations accompanying approval. ABA approval is held by few, if any, community college programs. Spread the news.

If not required, is the program eligible for accreditation?

Unacceptable
Concern

No answer. Clarify for reviewer that the accreditation is not required, yet is desirable. Explain reasoning for seeking accreditation.

Has this program/department sought accreditation even though it is not required (e.g. yes; If no, explain)?

Unacceptable
Concern

No answer. Please respond to all questions.

Is this program/discipline required to receive approval from an external agency or organization (other than the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board) in order to offer courses? Identify the external approver(s) for the department/program.

NO ANSWER

IF the program/discipline is required to receive approval from an external agency or organization (other than the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board) in order to offer courses, was (were) the external approver(s) for the department/program identified?

Unacceptable
Concern

No answer. Please respond to all questions.

What approval schedule is required by the external approver(s)?

NO ANSWER

Was the approval schedule required by the external approver(s) identified?

Unacceptable

Concern

No answer. Please respond to all questions, even if response is "not applicable."

When did the program/department last receive approval?

NO ANSWER

When did the program/department last receive approval?

Unacceptable

Concern

No answer. Please respond to all questions, even if response is "not applicable."

Is the reason why the program/department is required to receive this approval clear?

Unacceptable

Concern

No answer. Please respond to all questions, even if response is "not applicable."

Improvements

Identify at least one example of an improvement/revision which resulted from the

annual PET forms for the last five years

ABA (American Bar Association) approval of the program granted in February 2006.

After reviewing at least one example of improvements/revisions that resulted from the annual PET forms for the last five years, determine the extent that this program/department has used the PET forms to make improvements/revisions. Does this meet the minimum expectations for using PET forms to make improvements/revisions to the program/department?

Acceptable

Concern

Answer needs to be more comprehensive. Please hyperlink to PET forms to provide reviewer access to review process and improvement implementation. And, "spell check" all answers.

Identify at least one example of improvements/revisions which resulted from the last Program Review.

Two recommendations from the 2001 Business Division program review are as follows: (1.) The division should work closely with the office of Institutional Research to develop efficient statistical data and formal tracking systems that provide timely and accurate data to be used in evaluating programs. Statistical information should be understood and utilized by all program areas. The institution should also develop more effective methods to track students and graduates when the leave AmarilloCollege. Improvement Revision: This program worked with Delton Moore of Institutional Research and created an electronic Paralegal Studies Graduate Survey. (2.) Some programs in the division have brochures and a web site to market their programs to prospective students. The committee recommends that these marketing tools be developed by all the programs in the division. Improvement/Revision: The Paralegal Studies brochure has been completely revised and is in the process of

being printed for distribution in September 2006.

After reviewing at least one example of improvements/revisions that resulted from the last Program Review, determine the extent to which this program/department values the Program Review process to make improvements/revisions.

Acceptable

Concern

Two very commendable improvements are identified here. However, evidence of improvement should also be included in answer via the use of hyperlinks to the survey document created by Institutional Research, the pdf file of the paralegal studies marketing brochure, and statistical data.

Identify all the delivery approaches used for courses within this program/department: (Select all that apply.)

traditional classroom

After reviewing all delivery approaches for courses within this program/department, is this program positioned for growth? Does the committee have recommendations for delivery options which will provide additional growth?

Web

After reviewing at least one example of

improvements/revisions that is a response to accomplish a strategy or tactical objective within the Strategic Plan 2010-2015, determine the extent to which this program/department has contributed to the implementation success of the Strategic Plan? Does this department/program understand how it relates to the institution's future based on the Strategic Plan?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

Strive to provide a more comprehensive answer which would address the following concerns: Is there a reason the program is limited to traditional classroom delivery? Is teaching enhanced using SMART classroom technology, professional speakers, field trips, etc.? Can access to paralegal studies be expanded through the use of Web or hybrid courses?

In addition, program advancement and success should be directly tied to the College strategic plan. Provide a hyperlink to the Strategic Plan and connect the program's improvements/revisions to specific, strategic goals and/or objectives.

Identify at least one example of an

improvement/revision that is a response to accomplish a strategy or tactical objective within the Strategic Plan 2010-2015.

The department desires to initiate more recruiting of first-generation college students to enroll in the Paralegal Studies Program. The program would offer them an opportunity to obtain employment upon graduation and/or continue their education at a four-year institution. This program also enhances employee by training the paralegal students to embrace the technology that is available. Each paralegal student pays a fee to have access to Lexis Nexis which is an online database utilized by lawyers in many areas of law and this is a valuable tool for the students to learn and utilize here at college before being employed full-time in the industry.

After reviewing at least one example of improvements/revisions that is a response to accomplish a strategy or tactical objective within the Strategic Plan 2010-2015, determine the extent to which this program/department has contributed to the implementation success of the Strategic Plan? Does this department/program understand how it relates to the institution's future based on the Strategic Plan?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

The identified improvement/revision is not clearly tied to a strategy or tactical objective within the Strategic Plan through 2010; consequently, it is unclear whether the department is aware of how it contributes to the realization of the Strategic Plan or how it is related to the institution's future. Explanatory text with a hyperlink to Goal

2 of the Strategic Plan is essential for connecting the departmental goal with the broader College mission.

Reference to teaching technology and utilizing Lexis Nexis alludes to Goal 8 of the Strategic Plan. However, a more comprehensive response with related hyperlink is necessary.

Does this Committee have recommendations as to how this program/department may contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

Diversifying the method of course delivery by adding the options of hybrid and online course formats would address student and community needs identified in both [Goal 1](#) and [Goal 8](#) of the Strategic Plan through 2010. In addition, accomplishment of these goals would necessitate minimal use of external resources on the departmental level. The use of Lexis Nexis could easily be implemented into both formats, furthering the department's plan to "enhance employee by training the paralegal students to embrace the technology that is available."

Provide names and titles of those who determined the process used to assess outcomes of the program and/or courses in the department.

Debbie Bailey, Legal Studies Coordinator until Fall 2006. Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee. Paralegal Studies Part-Time Faculty.

Has the program/department had a broad base of involvement from a majority of faculty and staff with the program/department regarding implementation of student learning

outcomes of the program(s) (or department) and courses? What recommendations does the committee have for increasing involvement?

Acceptable

Concern

Please provide a more comprehensive answer to better identify broad-based involvement in implementation of student learning outcomes.

Specifically, identify advisory committee members and part-time faculty and provide titles within community to validate expertise.

Participation appears to be broad-based, it simply needs to be fully identified.

Explain the primary reasons behind the competencies that were selected.

To correlate with AmarilloColleges goals as indicated on the 2004-2005 PET and to obtain ABA approval of the program.

Do the selected competencies appear to be valid?

Acceptable

Concern

The PET forms indicate departmental goals; Amarillo College's goals are identified in the Strategic Plan. Both documents should be hyperlinked and tied to this response, as necessary, to clarify the departmental goals which support the College mission and/or

Strategic Plan.

In addition, identify the primary reasons the advisory committee and part-time paralegal studies faculty supported the choice of competencies selected. Any hyperlinks to Advisory Committee Minutes and PET forms would enhance answer.

Identify the primary reasons for the assessment tool(s) selected.

To ensure and maintain the goals and integrity of the program. To promote lifelong learning. Ensure quality in the alternative delivery of courses.

Will the assessment tool(s) selected provide valid and reliable results?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

Response reflects strategic goals of program; however, assessment tools for measuring attainment of goals is unclear.

Evaluate the assessment approaches to date.

The assessments are in the very beginning stages. Some tools for assessment are the Advisory committee will discuss the utilization of paralegals in the workplace. Additionally, a graduate survey is done of the program graduates approximately six months after graduation. Every two years, the ABA requires that an employer survey be sent out. An employer survey should be sent out in late 2006 to assess how area employers perceive the program and its graduates.

Will the assessment approaches(s) selected provide valid and reliable results?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

Current methods are anecdotal/qualitative data.

"Beginning stages" doesn't reflect possible methods for assessment which would be viewed as credible or more reliable. Please clarify.

For student or program/course outcome assessments, review the program's/department's five-year graph(s) of quantitative results or provide a brief narrative summary of qualitative results.

Results from Headcount by Program by Academic Year, Enrollments in Department by Academic Year, and Course Completion by Department by Academic year show very little discrepancies or differences from year to year.

These graphs are displayed later in this review.

Review the program's/department's five-year graph(s) of quantitative results for student or program/course outcome assessments, or provide a brief narrative summary of qualitative results.

Acceptable

What changes have been made in the curricula of the program/department because of the analysis of these results?

October 24, 2000 . Campus-wide curriculum change mandated by SACS. At this point, paralegal studies added a three-credit hour humanities/fine arts requirement which replaced the ENGL-1 302 Freshman Comp. II requirement. Paralegal Studies Majors now have the choice of taking ENGL-1 302 or GOVT2306. On January 29, 2001, pursuant to recommendations by the Paralegal Advisory Committee, the following changes were effective Fall 2001: (1) Change LGLA 2380: Practicum from 3 semester hours to 2 semester hours credit; delete 1 hour lecture part of the course; leave the 20 external hours. Change course number from LGLA 2380 to LGLA 2266. (This will change the total semester hours of the degree plan from 72 to 71-72); (2) Add LGLA 1366/2366: Practicum Specialty as an optional course. Student may use

this option for credit by experience; (3) Move POFT 1309: Administrative Office Procedures I from Major Course Requirements to Related Required Courses; (4) Move LGLA 1343 Bankruptcy from Related Required Courses to Major Course Requirements; (5) Move POFI 2301: Word Processing, and POFT 2301: Document Formatting and Skillgilding from Other Related Requirements to Related Required Courses; (6) Delete POFT 1302: Business Communications I and POFT 2312: Business Communication II; (7) Add COSC 1301: Computer Concepts to Other Related Requirements; (8) Add ENGL 23xx:

Sophomore Literature or GOVT 2306: Government of Texas and the United States to General Education Electives; (9) Add COSC 1301: Computer Concepts as a prerequisite for LGLA 1301, 1345, 1353, 1355, and 2335; (10) Add concurrent enrollment in RDNG 0331: Reading Techniques II or pass TASP test as an elective for LGLA 1307. May 17, 2001, recommended by the Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee to replace PHIL 2303: Logic under Related Course Requirements with LGLA 1309: Cognitive Skills for the Legal Profession (an approved WECM course) under Major Course Requirements, because it will better prepare students for the Judgment and Analytical Thinking portion of the Certified Legal Assistant exam. March 22, 2002, Academic Affairs Committee approved, pursuant to recommendations by the Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee to change Mathematics/Natural Science requirement to: March 1333: Contemporary Mathematics (OR any MATH*). This class does not transfer to a four-year institution, therefore if a student is planning on transferring, they will be advised that College Algebra is recommended. October 1, 2002, Academic Affairs Committee approved, pursuant to recommendations by the Paralegal Advisory Committee to Replace POFT 1309: Administrative Office Procedure (Related Course) with a new course-- LGLA 2307: Law Office Management (Major Course). This course will focus on how things work in a normal, every day law office. December 6, 2002 changes to descriptions of LGLA 2266: Practicum Paralegal/Legal Assistant and LGLA 1366/2366: Practicum Specialty-Paralegal/Legal Assistance were revised to meet WECM guidelines as follows: A basic or intermediate type of non-health professions work-based instruction that provides basic career exploration or helps students gain practical experience in the discipline, enhance skills, and integrate knowledge. The emphasis is on practical work experience. Indirect supervision is provided by the work supervisor. A practicum may be a paid or unpaid learning experience. On January 13, 2004, in the process of obtaining American Bar Association (ABA) program approval, Paralegal Studies changed from Humanities/FineArts requirement to Humanities and added a Real Estate Specialty Option which will make those students eligible to take the Texas Real Estate License Exam. On September 28, 2004, in the process of obtaining ABA program approval, procedures were created and approved by Academic Affairs regarding transfer credit and credit by exam policies for Paralegal Studies Majors. On October 31, 2005, in the process of obtaining ABA program approval, transfer procedures were revised as follows: A student may transfer legal specialty courses consistent with institutional policies; however, as a requirement of the ABA Accreditation, a student must complete a minimum of 18 hours of legal specialty courses at Amarillo College. All of the above

qualitative paralegal studies curriculum changes are based on SACS and/or ABA program approval guidelines.

Have any changes been made in the curricula because of the analysis of these results?

Acceptable

Relationship between analysis of graphs and curricula changes is not clear. Response indicates curricula changes are processed in response to a variety of opportunities and reflect input from multiple sources.

Spell check: cources

Review the five-year graph(s) of course completions for the program/department. Explain any increase or decrease that is more than a one-year anomaly.

Review of the data from the past five years, there does not seem to be any significant increases or decreases in course completions which would raise any red flags regarding the department.

Does the review of the five-year graph(s) of course completions demonstrate the use of analysis to implement a plan of action for retention? Is the analysis of any increase or decrease that is more than a one-year anomaly accurate?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

Identify the plan of action for maintaining and/or improving retention efforts. It is unclear how program analysis stats and utilizes them to determine how to best serve students to ensure their continued enrollment and success in the program.

Provide the program's/department's plan of action for improving any identified problem or results from the implementation of the plan of action.

The Paralegal Studies program is consistently updating and evaluating to remain in compliance with the SACS and ABA guidelines.

Will the plan of action likely improve the number of course completers?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

Specifically detail how the program "consistently updates and evaluates to remain in compliance with the SACS and ABA guidelines." What are the chronological steps? Is there a timeframe which program adheres to when updating and evaluating? Is there a checklist of components?

Does the program/department provide for alternative methods of awarding credit?

Has the program/department provided for alternative methods of awarding credit? If not, which alternative methods would be recommended?

Department Examinations

What approaches are used to assure outcomes are comparable to those expected of students who enrolled and completed the course?

Unacceptable

Concern

No response.

It is unclear whether or not there are alternative methods of awarding credit. And, if there are, what approaches are used to ensure comparable outcomes.

For general education and/or core curriculum required by this program/department, identify the relevant competencies approved by the Academic Affairs Committee (see Catalog section entitled Degrees and Certificates: General Education Competencies).

Students are required to complete the General Education Requirements (15 hours required) as listed in the college catalog: Freshman Composition I, ENGL 1301; Humanities (3 credit hours); Psychology; Math; Speech. General Education Electives (3 credit hours) of GOVT 2306 .Government of Texas OR ENGL 1302 Freshman Composition II. Other Related Requirements (3 hours) COSC 1301 .Computer Concepts. The electronic link to this information is located at <http://www.wactx.edu/programs/index.php?module=article&view=53&MMNJPosition=67:67>

Have all relevant competencies for general education and/or core curriculum been identified for this program/department? If not, which are obviously a part of this

program/department's general education competencies?

Acceptable

Explain how outcomes for the competencies have been assessed and achieved and provide links to the documentation.

The college is in the process of evaluating outcomes for the competencies according to the Institutional Portfolio Model.

Additionally, this program may rely upon graduate surveys, employer surveys, and matters discussed and brought before the Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee.

The only plan of study available for paralegal majors is an Associate in Applied Science which is awarded upon the completion of a technical curriculum. This curriculum is designed to prepare the student to enter a paralegal career directly upon completion of the program under the supervision of an attorney.

Is the explanation of assessment approach(es) for general education competencies (outcomes) thorough? Is the analysis of the results accurate? Have links to documentation which verify the assessment results been included?

Acceptable

Concern

Provide hyperlinks to advisory committee minutes, graduate surveys, and employer surveys which are used to assess outcomes for the competencies. Hyperlinks in textual response will document the program's efforts.

Outline a plan for correcting any weaknesses.

The plan is to analyze the employer survey which is done approximately once every two (2) years to determine how graduates are performing upon graduation. The last survey was done the Summer of 2004.

If assessment results and analysis are included, is there a plan for correcting any weaknesses included?

Acceptable

Do students/graduates in this program/department have to be certified or licensed?

Review the results for certification/licensure results of the program/department and/or job placement for the past five years. Explain any increase or decrease that is more than one-year anomaly.

NO ANSWER

Provide a plan of action for the identified problem.

NO ANSWER

IF students/graduates in this program/department have to be certified or licensed, do the results over the past five-years indicate that certification/licensure have been equal to or greater than the average of the past five-years AND/OR equal to the statewide or national benchmark for this certification/licensure? IF NOT, does the analysis and plan of action appear that the program/department has thoroughly reviewed the problem?

N/A

Is the program's/department's plan of action for improving any identified problem or results likely to improve the certification/licensure results? Did program/department explain any increase or decrease that is more than a one-year anomaly? Does the plan correct any weaknesses included? If not, what is missing?

N/A

IF the department or program offers one or more technical programs (Associate in Applied Science or Certificates), has the program/department included an explanation of the job placement success during the past five years AND are these results at least equal to the statewide annual benchmark (90%)?

Is the analysis of any increase or decrease that is more than a one-year anomaly accurate?

According to the graduate surveys conducted by the Paralegal Studies Program, the majority of graduates are currently employed in the legal profession and/or continuing their education at a four-year university.

Is the program's/department's plan of action for improving any identified problem or results likely to improve the job placement rate for graduates of the technical program(s)? If not, what is

missing?

The Paralegal Studies Coordinator, faculty, and advisory committee are required to review the results of graduate and employer surveys to remain in compliance with the ABA program approval. Corrections/revisions will be based upon the results of those surveys.

IF the department or program offers one or more technical programs (Associate in Applied Science or Certificates), has the program/department included an explanation of the job placement success during the past five years?

Is the analysis of any increase or decrease that is more than a one-year anomaly accurate?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

Unclear how the local paralegal job placement rate compares to the state annual benchmark. Please be specific with data. Hyperlink to files which confirm response statements.

A clear plan of action should be detailed, explaining how analysis of the graduate and employer surveys is utilized to remain in compliance with ABA program approval while maintaining job placement rates. The plan of action should include a timeline of activities, including analysis and intervention steps, as necessary.

Is the program's/department's plan of

action for improving any identified problem or results likely to improve the job placement rate for graduates of the technical program(s)?

Unacceptable

Recommendation

See above.

Curricula

Does the program/department have affiliation(s)/agreement(s)/contract(s) with any other entity for the purpose of delivering instructional content?

Review the affiliation(s)/agreement(s)/contract(s), consider Amarillo College's mission, and then make a recommendation to:

Provide an analysis of the review.

NO ANSWER

If the program/department has affiliation(s)/agreement(s) with any other entity for the purpose of delivering instructional content, do these affiliations/agreements make it clear that Amarillo College maintains the responsibility for controlling all aspects of the educational program? Has the College ensured the quality of the program with these affiliations/agreements? If so, how?

What is the schedule for reviewing the quality of these programs? Has the College ensured that programs remain with Amarillo College's mission?

N/A

How many curricula changes were approved by the Academic Affairs Committee during the past five years?

Nine. Majority of changes were to bring the program into compliance with the American Bar Association's guidelines for program approval. Which steps in the curricula change process had faculty involvement prior to submitting the curricula proposal(s) to the Academic Affairs Committee?

NO ANSWER

Was the departmental faculty involvement documented and broad in representation? If not, what steps within curricula change process should have had more proof of greater departmental faculty involvement? Is the primary responsibility for curricula changes under the control of faculty? Does the program have a qualified faculty member in charge of the program's coordination and curriculum development?

Unacceptable

Concern

Answer question fully.

Is any program within the department a technical program (e.g. AAS or certificate)?

When was the last Advisory Committee meeting?

May 2, 2006

Provide a link to the minutes of the last Advisory Committee(s) minutes in the Electronic Archives.

<http://archives.actx.edu/pdf/minutes/paralegal/5-4-05.pdf>

Provide a link to the appropriate committee membership of the Advisory Committee(s) in the Electronic Archives.

<http://archives.actx.edu/pdf/members/paralegal.pdf> This list was revised March 9, 2006.

If the department offers an AAS and/or certificate, do the minutes of the Advisory Committee prove that the curricula for each program is appropriate to the degree and/or certificate? Has the Advisory Committee been consulted in designing each degree and certificate? Has the Advisory Committee met at least once a year and been provided ample opportunity to guide the faculty in curricula changes?

Acceptable

Is the membership of the Advisory

Committee broad enough to provide the scope of advice necessary for input on curricula? If not, what changes are recommended to the program/department?

Acceptable

Enrollment Data

After receiving the data indicating the number of students enrolled in the program/department, by total students, number of full-time equivalents, and number of completers, determine if there is more than a one-year anomaly.

If so, provide the faculty and staff analysis of their assessment of the problem.

Based upon comparison of the Headcount by Program by Academic Year, Enrollments in Departments by Academic Year, and Table 4G: Unduplicated Annual Count of Students Receiving Degrees & Certificates, slight variances in enrollment can be attributed to high graduation rates from the previous year.

Does the analysis by the faculty and staff of this data address any obvious problems/declining statistics?

Acceptable

Create an action plan for needed improvement and commendation for any dramatic improvement.

The department plans on recruiting by visiting local high school career days and to maintain open lines of communication with the College Relations Office to keep the enrollments steady or on a growth pattern. A major component of this department's action plan was to receive American Bar Association program which was accomplished in February, 2006.

Does the action plan or commendation address the problem addressed within the analysis? Does it appear that implementation of the action plan will resolve the problem and correct the decline?

Acceptable

Commendation

American Bar Association affirmation is excellent, and should be a selling point for interested students. Continue to refine an action plan which will address the need to increase enrollment, including specific tasks and a timeline for working with College Relations to get the message out to interested students.

Does the External Review Committee have

any other analysis or recommendations for increasing enrollments based on the program/department's data?

Work with College Relations to market the Paralegal Studies program. In addition, advisory committee members can be excellent resources for spreading information about the program throughout the community.

For programs/departments with majors, review the graphs of program majors and the number of new majors by year.

Provide an analysis of the program's/department's faculty and staff assessment of the problem and an action plan for needed improvement and commendation for any dramatic improvement.

There have been no dramatic changes in the Headcount by Program by Academic Year and Table 1H: Unduplicated Fall Headcount of Students Receiving Grade Reports Limited to Students New to Amarillo College. The program will work to maintain the American Bar Association approval; this is an ongoing process.

Does the analysis by the faculty and staff of

this data address any obvious problems/declining statistics regarding students enrolled as majors within the program/department? Does the action plan or commendation address the problem addressed within the analysis? Does it appear that implementation of the action plan will resolve the problem and correct the decline? Does the External Review Committee have any other analysis or recommendations for increasing the number of students majoring in this program/department based on this program's/department's data?

Acceptable

Resources

Review the five-year graph(s) of the student-to-faculty ratio in the program/department.

Explain any increase or decrease that is more than a one-year anomaly.

The Average Students per Faculty Member per Section shows that the years 2002 to 2004 were fairly steady with an increase in 2005; this was due to a slight enrollment increase.

Does the analysis by the faculty and staff of

this data address any obvious problems/declining statistics regarding student-to-faculty ratio within this program/department?

Acceptable

Concern

Tell reviewer specifics: what was the student-faculty ratio? Explain what this ratio means to students and/or department.

Provide an action plan for improvement of any identified problem.

In striving to obtain instructional efficiency, the ideal faculty to student ratio would be 20 to 25 students per faculty.

Does the action plan or commendation address the problem addressed within the analysis? Does it appear that implementation of the action plan will resolve the problem and correct the decline? Does the External Review Committee have any other analysis or recommendations regarding student-to-faculty ratio within this program/department?

Acceptable

Concern

Unclear what the actual student-faculty ratio is to consider suggested ratio of 25:1. Hyperlinks to

graphs and source of "instructional efficiency" definition would aid argument.

No action plan is explained.

In the database for [Roster of Instructional Staff](#) (also known as Roster of Faculty), review the credentials of each full-time and part-time faculty member within the program/department. If any faculty member does not meet the SACS and THECB requirements, evaluate whether additional documentation is significant to grant an exemption.

All faculty, full-time and part-time, meet the SACS, THECB, and the American Bar Association faculty guidelines.

Identify any faculty teaching a transfer course which, according to the information within the database for [Roster of Instructional Staff](#) (also known as Roster of Faculty) do not meet the requirements of faculty teaching a transfer course and explain the credential problem. Identify any faculty teaching a technical course which, according to the information within the database for [Roster of Instructional Staff](#) (also known as Roster of Faculty) do not meet the requirements of faculty teaching a technical course and explain the credential problem based on SACS requirements

and/or THECB requirements. Identify any faculty teaching a developmental course which, according to the information within the database for Roster of Instructional Staff (also known as Roster of Faculty) do not meet the requirements of faculty teaching a developmental course and explain the credential problem.

Acceptable

Concern

List names of all instructional staff, full- and part-time, in above explanation.

List the names and the last date for all full-time faculty evaluations based on the schedule indicated in the Faculty Performance Review (FPRP).

Debbie Bailey was evaluated on _____.

If any full-time faculty member (or Board-appointed faculty member) has not been completed the Faculty Performance Review (FPRP) within the past two years and is listed in the aforementioned Roster of Instructional Staff (also known as Roster of Faculty), identify the faculty member's name and the date of the last FPRP.

Unacceptable

Concern

Last date of full-time instructor's evaluation is not noted.

List the names of each part-time faculty and the last date of evaluation by students and supervisor for each course taught.

Tom Boyd, Rhonda Brashears, Slater Elza, David Kemp, Joel Jackson, Mia Moustakis, Donna Peck are the current part-time faculty for Paralegal Studies. In order to obtain and maintain ABA program approval, the program coordinator and/or the coordinator's assistant observes every paralegal studies class each semester. In addition, student evaluations are also done for each paralegal studies class each semester, including spring and summer terms. This faculty evaluation process is more intensive than that required by Amarillo College.

If any part-time faculty member has not been evaluated by both students and supervisor for each course taught within the past year and is listed in the aforementioned [Roster of Instructional Staff](#) (also known as Roster of Faculty), identify the faculty member's name and state the specific problem.

Acceptable

Provide hyperlinks to document unique

evaluative process for paralegal studies instructors, as coordinated with ABA affirmation.

Amarillo College's Board Policy Manual defines each faculty member's academic freedom as "full freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject being taught and to pursue research and publications. However, a faculty member must not attempt to force on students a personal viewpoint and must at all times allow for diversity of opinion." Has anyone in the program/department filed a grievance for violation of the aforementioned academic freedom?

If anyone within the department has filed a grievance for violation of academic freedom based on the definition stated in Amarillo College's Board Policy Manual, briefly describe the violation (excluding personal identifiers) and the total number of violations.

N/A

Which of the following library collections/resources/services have been used by faculty, staff and/or students within the past five years? (Select all that apply.)

Does it appear that the library collections/resources/services used by the

faculty, staff, and/or students within the past five years are accurate and thorough?

Acceptable

Which two or three collection/resources/services should be improved to support Amarillo College's mission regarding teaching and service?

Maintain or improve paralegal specific and/or law references.

Has the program/department identified which two or three collections/resources/services should be improved to support Amarillo College's mission regarding teaching and service?

Acceptable

Does your program/department have discipline accreditation?

How has the library participated in this discipline's accreditation?

Does the program/department have a discipline accreditation? IF SO, has the library participated in completing the approver's evaluation?

N/A

After assessing the strengths and weaknesses of

the program's/department's access to technology, what improvements would ensure that students have access and training in the use of technology?

The Paralegal Studies program tries to stay current with technology by utilizing information obtained from employer and graduate surveys, Advisory Committee input, and faculty input.

Does the program's/department's assessment of strengths and weaknesses include ways to improve both students' access to & training in the use of technology?

Acceptable

Concern

Cite specific improvements which could be implemented to ensure students have access and training in the use of technology. Visionary planning should look beyond what is currently available to identify what will be needed in the future.

What improvements would ensure that students use technology?

As required by the ABA approval, all paralegal studies classes must have a practical assignment component and many times technology is utilized to complete the practical assignment. Such as the use of ProDoc and Lexis Nexis database

research.

Does the program's /department's answer include improvements that would ensure that students use technology? Are the recommendation(s) of this program/department feasible?

Acceptable

Review program/department operations. Does any operation present the possibility for violations of security, confidentiality, or integrity of student records?

What changes need to be made to prevent violations of this nature?

After a review of this program's /department's operations based on this Self-Study and any other information available to this Committee, does any operation present the possibility for violations of security, confidentiality, or integrity of student records? If so, describe those operations and identify the violation possibility in detail.

N/A

What changes need to be made to prevent violations of this nature?

N/A

Which support services need to be strengthened to better serve students in this program/department?

The Paralegal Studies program is very satisfied with the support services for students. In addition, the ABA approval process also recognized the adequacy of the support services for students.

Explain what aspects of the services need to be strengthened.

Do the Self-Study recommendations of this program/department for support services that need to be improved appear to be valid?

Acceptable

Concern

Identification of key support services would better assist reviewer and College in identifying services which should be maintained or improved through the College system.

Describe any indicators or problems that prevent a healthy, safe and secure environment for the students, faculty and staff of this program/department.

For the problems that have arisen, Amarillo College policies and procedures have satisfactorily resolved them.

Are recommendations to assure a healthy, safe and secure environment for staff and students of this program/department valid? Are any of these recommendation(s) more significant and/or urgent?

Acceptable

Describe any indicators or problems that hamper adequate physical facilities, both on and off campus, to meet the needs of the program/department.

Facilities need to be upgraded to accommodate students with physical disabilities, specifically those confined to wheelchairs. Examples would be automatic doors for interior double doors located in Parcels and Byrd Business Buildings. The elevator needs to be upgraded so that it is running more than it is down. For instance, one Saturday several years ago, a student confined to a wheelchair was stranded on the third floor because the elevator was not working. The instructor called 911 and the student had to be carried down the stairs in a chair by the firemen responding to the call. This is not a safe condition for the student or the rescuers.

Do any of the problems or concerns regarding adequate physical facilities appear to be significant and/or urgent? Are

there any other needs which this Self-Study didn't cite but are critical based on other information? Which of these needs are most significant and/or urgent?

Acceptable

Budget

Which program/department outcomes have resulted in budget requests to date?

To obtain and maintain ABA program approval, the Paralegal Studies program must subscribe to professional periodicals, belong to professional organizations at the local, state and national levels, must conduct two Advisory Committee meetings per year, must subscribe to an electronic legal research database (Lexis Nexis), and attend the American Association for Paralegal Educators (AAfPE) annual conference each fall (this conference site is dictated by AAfPE and can be held anywhere in the continental United States.)

Have any of this program's/department's outcomes resulted in budget requests to date? If not, why not?

Acceptable

Project the program's/department's strategic initiatives for the next five years based on the

program's/department's outcomes.

Maintain the requirements for continued ABA approval of the Paralegal Studies Program. This may require additional funds as membership dues, publication expenses, etc. may increase with time.

Has this program/department been able to project strategic initiatives for the next five years based on the program's/department's outcomes? If not, what appears to be blocking this program/department from accomplishing this?

Acceptable

Publications

If the program/department publishes any advertising or recruitment documents (electronic or paper), do the documents accurately represent Amarillo College and the program/department?

If no, explain what is inaccurate.

NO ANSWER

IF the program/department has published any advertising or recruitment documents (electronic or paper), check at least one copy of each document and determine whether it accurately represents Amarillo College and the office/department?

N/A

Please respond. If no advertising or recruitment documents are available, please note that.

Collaborate with College Relations to produce a departmental document which highlights the ABA commendation.

IF anything appears to be inaccurate, identify the apparent violation.

N/A

Does the program/department publish any documents (electronic or paper) with references to SACS accreditation?

Are the references in compliance with SACS approved statement?

Which reference is not in compliance? Describe how you will assure compliance for all references in the future.

NO ANSWER

IF the program/department has published any document(s) with a reference to SACS accreditation, are all references consistent with the approved statement? (Approved reference: Amarillo College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to

award associate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Amarillo College.) IF any references are inconsistent, identify all documents with the inconsistent reference(s).

N/A

IF the Self-Study did identify the inconsistencies, does the plan for assuring future compliance appear to correct the problem? IF the Self-Study did NOT identify all inconsistencies, what plan does this Committee recommend?

N/A

Other

State any additional comments/concerns which may impact this program/department during the next five years.

The national outlook for paralegal studies major is very encouraging. It is still listed in one of the top growing professions for the next five years. However, in being realistic and cognizant of local changes and economic factors, we should be aware of the following: Saturation of the local

paralegal market. The volume of lawsuits and actions brought before the court systems have a tendency to ebb and flow and affect the delivery of legal services in any market. Possibility of other paralegal programs being offered in the TX Panhandle. Correspondence paralegal courses/certifications. Online paralegal courses/certifications. Low part-time faculty pay.

IF additional comments/concerns were included in the Self-Study regarding items which may impact this program/department during the next five years, what recommendations and/or concerns are warranted? IF NO such items were included in the Self-Study but this Committee feels such comments or concerns are valid, cite them and include any relevant recommendations.

Acceptable

External factors which may affect this program, as identified above, should also be addressed in the plan of action for student retention.

Specifically, concerns regarding correspondence and online paralegal courses and certifications could be challenged by local program which merges online program with campus-based

opportunities.

Spell check: econonmic