

**High Impact and Effective Program Design**

The following list of considerations is intended to convey general guidelines for designing highly effective, academic programs that lead to professional careers. This list is derived from a comparative analysis of accreditation standards and generally accepted procedures shared across disciplines in higher education. While the list is not exhaustive, it does provide fodder for collaborative dialogue among program designers and implementers.

- Clear mission that defines the values and intentional programming of the unit that explicitly addresses a societal good. Mission and values align with those of the school/college/university.
- Documentation of industry partners, alumni, and other stakeholders' contribution to program conceptualization and design with evidence of community demand/need.
  - What evidence can be provided to demonstrate that the proposed program fills an academic or professional need (on campus, within the region, and/or professional field)?
- Evidence that program adheres to current professional standards/learning outcomes and statues of the relevant public authorities.
- Consideration of emergent trends within the profession that have not yet been acknowledged by statutes and/or standards.
  - What are the new developments discussed among experts during professional forums like conferences?
- Aligned academic system that supports evidence-based decision making for continuous improvement (not limited to curriculum, operations, collaboration, leadership, etc.).
  - What interim and strategic assessments, aligned with program standards/learning outcomes are used to ensure students' steady progress toward unit goals?
  - What system exists for faculty to collect, analyze and review data from assessments to inform program efficacy and improvement?
  - How are assessment and curriculum development processes designed to ensure program cohesion while recognizing intellectual freedom among faculty?
  - In what ways is the culminating assessment benchmarked against entry level or expert knowledge of professionals?

## Eastern Connecticut State University

### School of Education and Professional Studies/Graduate Division

- Established system of support that fosters identification and recruitment, retention, and persistence among students towards graduation (and job placement and/or post-graduate study).
  - How are motivated and deserving, prospective students identified and recruited?
  - What formalized supports and opportunities for redemption/remediation are available to struggling students?
  - What processes and efforts are designed to foster persistence and 4-year graduation (at the undergraduate level)?
  - What is the logical sequence of courses aligned with students' developmental level(s) toward mastery of program standards?
  - How do students experience the program course-over-course and how are they assisted to understand and articulate course connections in relation to program standards/learning outcomes?
  - How are future graduates assisted for job placement and the continued development of skills following graduation?
- Procedures and cultural norms that respect and nurture diversity of composition, thought, and perspectives among faculty and students.
- Governance structure that demonstrates effective management of resources (fiscal, intellectual, and otherwise) for program quality and continuous improvement.
- System for assuring and maintaining requisite knowledge and skills of faculty for continuous program improvement.
- Effective collaboration among internal and external stakeholders, demonstrating positive impact on the institutional enterprise and the needs of external stakeholders.
- Defined brand recognition of program and graduates, as well as distinctiveness among peer and aspirant institutions.
- System for promoting program effectiveness and distinctiveness.
  - Are program effectiveness outlets and content diversified for the appropriate audience(s) (e.g., alumni, accreditors, prospective students, and funders)?