ACADEMIC DEAN AND PROVOST INSTRUCTION 5420.29H

From: Academic Dean and Provost

Subj: PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW AND VISITING COMMITTEES

1. Purpose. A program of periodic review and visiting committees has been established to ensure, and where feasible, to improve the quality of academic experiences provided to Midshipmen. Midshipmen academic experiences are a result of instruction within and support provided to majors, minors, core courses, and other educational opportunities. Components of this experience include instruction, curriculum, academic support services, and assessment.

2. Cancellation. ACDEANINST 5420.29G.

3. Background and discussion. A regular program of departmental visiting committees has existed at the Naval Academy since the early 1990s to provide an opportunity for internal evaluation, outside review, and feedback. Typically, each department or academic support area prepares a self-study document and hosts a visiting committee once within each five-year cycle. A typical visiting committee consists of three individuals chosen from a group nominated by the department, and approved by the Academic Dean and Provost (AcDean), for their particular expertise and prospective contributions to the department and discipline(s) being reviewed. The institutional expectations of each visiting committee include:

   a. Careful review of materials (e.g. the self-study) provided before and during the visit.

   b. Robust interaction with faculty, staff, midshipmen, and administrators during a multi-day visit to the Yard.

   c. Identification of challenges and opportunities within the programs, in light of best practices known to the committee.

   d. Recommendations to overcome any identified challenges.

   e. Availability as a source of advice to the faculty, staff and the Academic Dean and Provost with respect to the areas under consideration.

4. Action. The following actions and Academic Dean and Provost Notices (ACDEANNOT 5420.1) containing additional specific guidelines are directed in support of the Program Review/Visiting Committee Program at the Naval Academy:

   a. Visiting committees are established during a semester for a visit to be commenced early in the following semester. ACDEANNOT 5420 provides the schedule for periodic program reviews and visiting committees.

   (1) Each department or support area scheduled for a visit during a particular academic year will submit no fewer than five nominations including
a brief resume of experience relevant to the visit via the Division Director to the Academic Dean and Provost identifying potential members to serve on the Departmental Visiting Committee.

(2) Where possible, departments or support areas should suggest visitors of the highest quality whose expertise and experience align with those common to the department and to the Naval Academy, and who require minimum funds for travel and support.

(3) The departments or support areas will identify the principal point of contact for administering all aspects of their respective committee visit.

b. In preparation for the visiting committee the department or support area will prepare a self-study typically between 25 and 35 pages (not including front or back matter) focused on the quality of academic programs organized by items listed below and the guiding ACDEANNOTE 5420.1:

(1) Mission, Goals, and Outcomes
   (a) Departmental Mission Statement, Goals, and Learning Outcomes.
   (b) Including a description of how this information aligns with institutional priorities (e.g., strategic plans, attributes of graduate).

(2) Background and Essential Information
   (a) Curriculum and Educational Offerings.*
   (b) Faculty/Staff Profile and Productivity (including laboratory staff):
      (1) Table of faculty information by rank and appointment type.
      (2) Research/scholarship, creative work, and funding.*
      (3) Information on recruitment processes, recent hires, retention plans and retention.
      (4) Actions taken or anticipated to increase faculty diversity.

   (c) Enrollment Information
      (1) Recent trends in enrollment and demand for major/minors (as appropriate).*

*Typically the self-study will include a short summary or narrative and supporting materials will be included in an appendix.
(d) Assessment Information (majors, minors, and core courses)

(1) Learning outcomes.

(2) Plan, recent assessment activities, results, and actions taken.

(3) Recent reports within an appendix.

(3) Analysis of Strengths, Opportunities, and Challenges.

(a) Facilities (including laboratory facilities).

(b) Interdependencies with other areas.

(4) Questions the department or support area would like to have addressed.

(a) The visiting committee will (see 3. Background for additional information):

(1) Conduct a careful reading of the materials submitted prior to the visit.

(2) During the visit, interact with departmental faculty, Midshipmen, and administrators to identify good practices, challenges, and opportunities.

(3) Approximately four weeks after the visit the committee will provide a report to the department or support area, division, and dean indicating the extent to which the departmental programming supports Midshipman educational development and identifies strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvement.

(b) After the visiting committee report is received, the department or support area, division, and deans will determine an appropriate plan of action and milestones based on the self-study document and the visiting committee report culminating in a memorandum of understanding (MOU). Major steps include:

(1) Appropriate members of department or support area, division, and dean's office separately review the visiting committee report (alongside the self-study) and identify potential MOU items.

(2) Division leadership meets with members of the department to confer on possible MOU items.

(3) Division leadership meets with deans to provide potential departmental and division items for the MOU and obtain potential MOU items from deans. Division leadership and deans confer on accountable parties and schedules for completion.
(4) Appropriate members of department or support area, division, and Office of the Academic Dean and Provost meet to determine the final items for the MOU, accountable parties, and schedule.

(5) Within one year (earlier if the MOU dictates) the department or support area, division, and Office of the Academic Dean and Provost report on actions identified within the MOU and determine if further actions are necessary.

(5) Point of Contact. The Assistant Dean for Planning and Assessment will serve as the overall point of contact for the periodic program reviews and visiting committees instruction.

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