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To: Garrett Struckhoff, Coordinator
Environmental Engineering Program (Online)

From: Susamma Barua, Dean
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Subject: Dean's Review of the PPR Report, Online MS in Environmental Engineering

The PPR Report, External Review Team Report and the Response from the Program Coordinator to the External Review Committee Recommendations for the online MS degree program in Environmental Engineering have been reviewed at the dean's level. Here are the findings and follow up activities:

1. Provide guidelines for faculty members to streamline lectures and notes
Dean's office has recommended that the program consider scheduling faculty retreats to discuss strategic priorities and operational aspects of the program. Curricular currency and streamlining of course material must very well be part of the retreat agenda.
2. Deficiency courses in summer
Program's admission criteria and policies must include the evaluation of deficiency courses. Dean's recommendation is that the program provide appropriate advise and suggestions to students at the time of admission for completing the deficiency/bridge courses before they enroll in courses approved for the program's study plan.
3. Additional elective courses
The cohort nature of the program limits the flexibility of courses offered in any given semester. An alternate approach would be for the program to review and calibrate the currency and appropriateness of the courses that the program currently offer. The program may undertake a curricular revision based on the findings from the review.
4. More hands-on projects and environmental modeling and design works
Hands-on projects, environmental modelling and design considerations are integral components of the current curriculum. Recommendation made for Item #3 above may present opportunities for increased projects and modelling assignments.
5. Use of software used in the environmental engineering filed
The curriculum currently employs adequate use relevant software. Recommendation made for Item #3 above may allow the program to review the appropriateness of software that are



currently used and incorporate software, if any, that are more relevant to the field and industry.

6. Access to software through student portal
Many of the software currently used in the program are available free online for students to use and there is no need to make them available via student portal. However, this is an option for the program to consider when instructors plan to use specialized software.
7. Enhanced peer group interaction
Peer-group interaction is an integral component of the current curriculum. The program plans to introduce face-to-face meetings that will allow increased interaction among students.
8. Enhanced alumni involvement
The college recognizes alumni involvement as an area where more work is needed. Dean's office has made this as a priority item to focus on in AY 2018-19.
9. Assessment of courses and the program
Recommendation made for Item #3 above will allow the program to review the appropriateness and currency of the courses in the program. This, in turn, can lead to course revisions and addition/deletion of courses in order to be more relevant to the field and industry.
10. Increasing the faculty pool
The program has graduated a good number of students who are highly qualified, and with relevant industry experience, to be hired as adjunct faculty members to teach the courses in the program. The Civil and Environmental Engineering department has procedures in place for providing the training needed for the new adjunct faculty members the department hire. Therefore, provisions exist for adequate class coverage.
11. Appropriate investment of online course fee
The program coordinator is required to present a "Spending Plan" to the dean before the start of each academic year. The plan focuses on both the strategic priorities and operational needs of the program. The dean and the program coordinator review and discuss the plan. The dean allocates funds based on the "Spending Plan" review and discussion. Strategic investment is a primary consideration for the allocation of funds.

The recommendations provided here along with the response from the program coordinator establish a viable roadmap for addressing the findings of the External Review Team. The dean's office continues to support the program by sharing the salary and benefits towards the administrative support for the program and by compensating the coordinator's administrative responsibilities with six WTUs release time each semester.