Program Review Evaluation Team Report

1) Overview/introductory Statement

The Technical Sales Program at Weber State University is a very unique program which qualifies students in selling technical products or services to other businesses, manufacturing plants, professionals, and public and private institutions.   The seasoned faculty, staff, external partners, and students associated with the program are fiercely loyal and proud of the product that comes from a degree in Technical Sales. The program offers a great option for students looking to use the skills learned as entrepreneurs, negotiators, supervisors, and sales representatives to go out into the workforce and be successful leaders and business professionals. The Technical Sales program is a gem only found here in the west. The University should boldly highlight the many contributions the program offers.

2) Program Strengths:

Standard A: Mission Statement

- Expected outcomes are clearly defined
- Hands on industry experience applied to teaching
- High employment rate for graduates
- Graduates are highly commended for their preparedness to enter the workforce

Standard B: Curriculum

- Dynamic curriculum that can change or be enhanced based on the feedback of students, external partners, and industry.
- Trained, skilled faculty academic advisors
- Systematic review of all courses scheduled over next 4 years

Standard C: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

- The student learning outcomes are clearly defined. Gathering data will happen by November 15, 2012. There is a plan for the collection of this assessment piece.
- Both qualitative and quantitative measures are important to consider. Feedback from prospective employers indicated that the SST graduates were better prepared and ready to hire than any other graduates. The SST students "Shine!"

- The learning outcomes seem to be support the overall goals. They are measurable and attainable. We thought that 13 were too many but the faculty feel that this best demonstrates the breadth and depth of the learning that happens in the department.
- Review of the curriculum grid is complete and well defined.
- All 1000 level classes are offered both summer and fall semesters.
- Review a more hybrid approach to course offerings. Students suggest that this approach is more conducive to their learning styles. External contributors also suggest a hybrid approach to classes.

Standard D: Academic Advising

- All faculty members have been trained on academic advising. This is viewed as a strength from by students. They like the interaction with the faculty. This benefit allows the faculty to know the students. There are some faculty members who do more advising but that seems to be their personal preference. It is a good plan to continue to advise using the alphabetical assignments.
- The students indicated that they utilize "Cat Tracks" and that helps them to see where they are on their path, as well as being able to follow up with the faculty in the department.

Standard E: Faculty

- One of the strengths of the program is the many years of experience that come with the faculty.
- Support from the Dean of the college is a strength. This program is a vital part of COAST.
- There are 3 adjunct faculty that help supplement the programs faculty. The emphasis needs to be on finding and hiring excellent full time faculty to replace the retiring full time faculty.
- Hiring of new full time faculty who bring additional diversity such as diversity of background in sales and technology. Reviewing the needs of the department, hiring could include faculty with backgrounds in diverse disciplines; industry, retail, manufacturing, technology, etc.
- Many procedures are in place, review of the courses, utilizing the CIEQ review is in place. The creation of courses is evident in the need and feedback from employers, and advisory board. There is a 4 year cycle in place for evaluation of curriculum.
- Utilizing the institutions evaluation process, every semester classes are evaluated and reviewed based on the track of the faculty.

Standard F: Program Support

- The support staff does a tremendous job in light of present responsibilities, additional support could be offered in two areas. Faculty upholding the due dates determined, and additional work space needed.

Standard G: Relationships with External communities

- Strong external partnerships. The Hall Center for Sales Excellence will be a highlight for the department and the University.
- Evidence of the relationship is in the scholarships and support for the department. This could be an area for significant growth and development.

3) **Program Challenges**:

Standard A: Mission Statement

- Implement a systematic process for reviewing and assessing the student learning outcomes.

Standard B: Curriculum

- Small number of faculty compared to the number of students.
- The direct instructional expenses have remained relatively flat
- The number of retirees preparing to leave the department in the next 5 years is monumental liability for the department.
- Classes will not be able to be supported if new faculty is not hired to replace retirees.
- Retirement and non-replacement of this faculty cannot sustain any increase in students.

Standard C: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

- Examples of the types of artifacts would be helpful. Determine what you are looking for prior to the collection.
- Work on "closing the loop" of assessment. What are we trying to tell with the assessment we gather, how do we know we are achieving our goals? The demonstration is the missing part.
- Develop a system to support the consistent and sustained efforts. Utilize the plan of collection now implemented.

- We didn't see the direct evidence of this. Although, the years of experience in the department give credibility to the changes that have been deemed necessary. There is evidence that based on experience, changes have happened for the betterment of the department without utilizing a formalized assessment plan.

Standard D: Academic Advising

- We would recommend that some of the faculty be able to assist the graduating student who are considering additional schooling options ie: graduate school requirements, and pre-reqs, for programs that are a natural fit for the SST graduates.

Standard E: Faculty

- Development activities do not seem to be a priority. The faculty doesn't have time to stay fresh and up to date. There needs to be more resources to assist in development activities for the faculty.
- Within 5 years many of the faculty will be retiring. The sustainability of the full time faculty is a concern.
- The emphasis needs to be on finding and hiring excellent full time faculty to replace the retiring full time faculty. The credibility of the program depends on this.
- Diversifying the Faculty: this could be accomplished through the hiring of new full time faculty who bring additional diversity such as diversity of background in sales and technology. Reviewing the needs of the department, hiring could include faculty with backgrounds in diverse disciplines; industry, retail, manufacturing, technology, etc.

Standard F: Program Support
- No concerns

Standard G: Relationships with external communities
- This area could use some improvement in formalizing the roles and membership of the external partners. There needs to be a blend of decision makers. Have an external chair of this committee; utilize a strong advisory board by giving them some authority and ownership in the committee and the decisions for the department. Have the advisory board assist in the curriculum review process and the hiring of new faculty. Meet regularly and have expectations for the committee.

Standard H: Program Summary
- No concerns

4) **Areas where the program did not meet the Standards and why**

       There are no areas where the program did not meet the Standards

5) **Recommendations for change- suggested changes for meeting Standards**

6) **Additional recommendations and comments from the review team**

- Recognizing the offering between on-line courses and hybrid courses and face to face classes, there needs to be a good balance in the offering of these courses. Considering budget possibilities, and the strain on the faculty, balance and offerings need to be evaluated.
- All faculty need to be involved in contributing to the assessment process. Creating a culture of on-going assessment practices.
- While completing the assessment procedures there need to be a "closing of the loop" with the assessment. What will be done with the findings of the assessment and how will that be applied to the operations of the department.
- Use assessment means to determine if it is true that retention is increased by faculty advising students. If this is not proven through assessment another option might be to hire an academic advisor for SST. Let the assessment tell the story.
- Review the Sr. Seminar course to see if it is in line and meeting the demonstrated learning outcomes. Utilize the external advising team to help determine the needs of current employers.
- Formalize the roles and membership of the external partners. There needs to be a blend of decision makers. Have a chair of this committee; utilize a strong advisory board by giving them some authority and ownership in the committee and the decisions for the department. Have the advisory board assist in the curriculum review process and the hiring of new faculty. Meet regularly and have expectations for the committee.
- The chair needs to sit down with the dean and review the present workload of the full-time faculty. Weber State has a standard work load of 12 teaching hours, however, most of the faculty are teaching several overload courses, two and three in most cases, of online courses to supplement their lack of raises during the past several years. This department's overload is among the highest within the university. However, a review of the excessive overload needs to reflect the balance of the other programs within the university as the high teaching load seems to limit the faculty's ability to stay current and up-to-date, become involved in professional activities, and also minimizes any scholarship endeavors.