**Department/Program Review Summary**

**2016-17**

**Department:** Criminal Justice Science (CJS)

**Date of Review:** February 23, 2017

**Review Team Members and Titles:**

Dave Collins, Provost

Jenni Brannan, Associate Registrar Strategy, Registration and Student Records

Daryl Curnutte, Assistant Professor, Computer Aided Manufacturing

Jared Cutler, Assistant Provost of Accreditation and Assessment

Randall Fletcher, Academic Advisor, Academic Advising

Molly Henderson, General Advocate, Montgomery County Prosecutor’s Office

Elaine Isbell, Professor, Psychology

Karl Konsdorf, Director, Research, Analytics & Reporting

Vicki Luster, Professor, Radiologic Technology

Jeffrey W. Mitchell, Chief of Police, Lebanon Division of Police

Jackie Myers, Division Assessment Coordinator, Business and Public Services

Carolyn Reno, Chair/Associate Professor, Veterinary Technology

Shari Rethman, Dean, Liberal Arts, Communication, and Social Sciences

**Department Members Present:**

Elizabeth Orlando, Dean, Interim Business & Public Services

Bob Rice, Chair/Professor, Public Safety

Faculty and Staff:

Pam Chambers

Angela Fernandez

Tom McAllister

Jeff Patzer

Annette Ross-Gray

Rawan Saleh

Janice Siler

Kip Smith

Cheryl Taylor

Laura Walker

Pete Willis

**COMMENDATIONS**

* The Review Team was extremely impressed by the level of candor and self-reflection by the department that was evident in the self-study. The department did a great job of highlighting its strengths – but even more impressive was the way it was so forthcoming about its opportunities for improvement. The Review Team felt that the department was true to the spirit of the self-study process - it is designed to encourage departments to take a good, hard look at themselves, and it was clear this is what the department did in their self-study. This was also evident in the discussion with the Review Team – there was excellent participation by the faculty and staff in the department, each of them responded to the questions posed at one point or another, and it was indicative of the involvement of the entire department in the aforementioned process of self-examination.
* There is a tremendous amount of experience and skill among the faculty and staff in the department. The Review Team was extremely impressed by the faculty and staff in the department, whose expertise is complemented by a commitment to putting its students first. One example of this commitment is the strong participation of faculty in the department in the Career Community, as attested by the Academic Advisor of that Career Community.
* This is a department with a proud, longstanding tradition of excellence in educating Criminal Justice professionals in the Dayton area. The Police Academy is well-known as the leading producer of area law enforcement professionals, and the other programs the department offers are also held in high regard. Not only has the program produced a large percent of the law enforcement professionals, but in producing a large number of police chiefs in the area it has had a tremendous impact on law enforcement leadership in the Miami Valley. The department has a proud tradition of a reputation for excellence.
* However, tradition has not kept the department from exploring new approaches. While of necessity Criminal Justice exists in a very structured environment, the structure inherent in this field of study has not stifled innovation. The Review Team was very impressed by the level of creativity displayed by the department in developing new ways to help students learn. This is a department that has the flexibility to move all of its coursework online if it believes this will help give greater numbers of students the opportunity to learn. It is a department that responded with impressive swiftness and agility in meeting the emerging educational needs of the state prison population. The department does a great job of balancing time-tested approaches with new ways of reaching students.
* The Advanced Job Training (AJT) program is one of the most impressive initiatives that Sinclair has undertaken in the past few years. The program has experienced explosive growth, and the administrative skill that had been demonstrated by the department in managing this growth has been exceptional. AJT offers incarcerated persons the opportunity to change their lives for the better, while lowering crime rates for the public as a whole and providing much needed enrollment for the college. On a personal level for the students, an institutional level for the College, and a societal level for the region this has been an influential, successful program. Of the many, many praiseworthy efforts Sinclair has been involved with over the years, this is one of the most deserving of commendation.
* One example of the department’s thoughtful approach to meeting stakeholder needs was the development of educational experiences for correctional officers that were developed in conjunction with the educational experiences that were created for inmates. It is indicative of a nuanced approach that considers the context in which its students operate.
* The department has done a number of things to increase success on Performance Based Funding measures – the AJT program has evidenced a steady increase in course success in recent years in addition to the spectacular increase in completions due to the short-term certificates completed by AJT students. AJT students have completion rates in the 90% range overall, which has a positive funding impact on the college.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

* The department itself noted a need to increase assessment efforts in the self-study. It was the feeling of the Review Team that the department may be closer than it realizes to reaching the next level in its assessment work. The department described a number of activities in the capstone where students are scored on rubrics for General Education outcome and program outcome related activities. The department is strongly encouraged to begin aggregating, analyzing, and reporting these rubric scores as a means of improving its assessment work. It would seem the department already has the pieces in place – it is recommended that the department take the next steps and begin reporting results in the next Annual Update submission. Similarly, during the meeting with the Review Team it emerged that detailed information from commissioning exams provides data on student performance on specific content areas on the exam – this is assessment data that was not reported in the self-study. The department is strongly encouraged to begin analyzing and reporting this valuable source of assessment data.
* The department discussed the possibility of developing new courses in human trafficking and technology in law enforcement. The department is strongly encouraged to develop these, and other new courses as appropriate, first as 2297 offerings. Figuring out how these courses would fit into the existing curriculum will be a challenge – the department may want to consider incorporating elective options into their programs to accommodate these new courses.
* During the meeting with the Review Team, a faculty member suggested the importance of obtaining feedback from graduates a couple of years after obtaining employment. This is an excellent idea, and the department is encouraged to pursue it. Connections with students will need to be made that will allow the department to reliably contact graduates two years after graduation. Fortunately, the department has already begun moving in this direction with the assignment that students develop LinkedIn profiles in CJS 2295. The department should implement a comprehensive plan for a long-term survey of graduates two years after employment to help assess the department’s efforts in preparing students for the workplace.
* Now that the Fire Science program has been incorporated into the department, the department may need to assess whether revisions to the mission statement may be appropriate.
* Mental health training is becoming more essential for law enforcement – the department is encouraged to reach out to the Psychology and/or Mental Health Technology departments to utilize their expertise in educating its students in this area. Along these lines, there was extensive discussion of the emergence of Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) to provide training on issues related to mental health and inter-professional collaboration with other departments – could a CIT program be offered at Sinclair? The department is encouraged to examine this possibility.
* It seems likely that experienced faculty will retire in the coming years – the department is encouraged to keep succession planning in mind. How can important expertise and institutional knowledge be preserved as personnel transition out of the department? There are a number of relatively new faculty with a great deal of potential – how can that potential best be developed? It is recommended that the department develop specific plans in this regard and share them in their Annual Update submission in the next year.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT’S PROGRESS AND GOALS**

What an impressive department! For years this department has had a stellar reputation among area law enforcement organizations. Recently the department has emerged as a state leader in education of incarcerated persons, with an Advanced Job Training program that has achieved impressive accomplishments in a relatively short period, and has provided an opportunity for inmates to change their lives in ways that give them a substantially greater chance of becoming positive contributions to society upon release. The faculty and staff have shown a willingness to examine themselves under a microscope, spotlighting the positive while candidly acknowledging the opportunities for improvement. This department is much closer to significant improvements in its assessment work than it realizes, and has shown a strong and commendable dedication to its students. Sinclair is extremely fortunate to have such a well-regarded and highly respected Criminal Justice department, with faculty and staff who have the experience, expertise, and focus on students to maintain that regard and respect.

**INSTITUTIONAL OR RESOURCE BARRIERS TO THE DEPARTMENT’S ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH ITS GOALS, IF ANY:**

* The only constraint on growth in the Advanced Job Training program is state funding – Sinclair is only enabled to offer the program to as many students as the state provides funding for. It may be necessary for the appropriate Sinclair leaders to lobby lawmakers and other state officials for additional funding for the program.
* The department is well aware of the need to attract more diverse students to its programs, and is not the only department at Sinclair that faces this challenge. How can Sinclair help its departments attract more diverse students to their programs? What could be done to better connect minority students to existing resources that would help them succeed in these programs?
* Are there opportunities to increase enrollment through recruiting students from proprietary institutions? The recent demise of ITT prompted Sinclair to change its transfer polices – with these revised policies, are there opportunities for recruiting students with credits from other private institutions? Law enforcement is far from the only area where there may be opportunities for this type of recruitment.