



Department and Program Review Response Letter Aviation

June 6, 2025

Dear Sarah, Matthew, Theresa, Steven, Emma, Amanda, and Nathan:

Thank you for taking part in Department & Program Review (DPR) this year. The DPR process reveals critical connections that link your strengths, needs, values, priorities, and plans to those of the College. Further, it supports our commitment to innovation through continual improvement. We commend your dedication to empowering our students, engaging our communities, and supporting our values. This response to your report is based on what we see as your successes, what you and we identified as challenges, and guidance on how to proceed with the goals and needs you have described.

Successes and Kudos

Your report has documented your achievement of program goals thoroughly and we are pleased that you often exceeded expectations by accomplishing goals in multiple ways. Highlights include increased fieldwork opportunities for students, thoughtful redevelopment of curriculum, and a notable increase in enrollment for the online section of FN 225. These successes reflect a strong commitment to continuous improvement and student engagement.

The department's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is commendable. Evidence of DEI-related study, planning, and implementation appears throughout the Departmental Program Review (DPR), illustrating that these values are deeply embedded in the department's work. Your work with Office of Diversity and inclusion staff and your intentional integration of DEI into new program development and collaborations further strengthens this commitment.

The department has also increased course offerings on branch campuses, an accomplishment that has required both creativity and strategic thinking due to lab space limitations. The integration of your work with the College's strategic plan and Guided Pathways framework is impressively thorough and well-articulated. Faculty contributions to sustainability and social justice have been strong, as shown by the development of several SUS- and SD-designated courses.

Innovative collaborations have been a key part of the department's outreach and support for students. By leveraging K-12 grant funding, the department has reached out to underserved and rural populations, helping these students see themselves in science. Collaboration with the library to make anatomical models available to students is another creative step forward. We suggest reaching out to the library to learn more about how frequently and effectively these models are being used.

Challenges

The department has been transparent in sharing ongoing challenges and deserves support in troubleshooting solutions. High enrollment numbers, staff shortages, and waitlists remain a significant concern. However, the department has demonstrated creativity in managing these challenges and has recently added new adjunct positions to help meet student demand while one faculty member is going on sabbatical. Of note, roughly one-third of students in these courses are Allied Health majors, reflecting the department's impact across disciplines.

Concerns about testing integrity have prompted a trial use of Proctorio, which is planned to continue through the 2025–26 academic year. The department is also partnering with Student Accessibility Services to explore in-person proctoring solutions and is actively working on multiple approaches to identify what works best.

A persistent issue is the lack of lab facilities in Madras and Prineville. To address this, Kyle Tafoya, Redmond laboratory assistant, has been given additional hours, and a lab specialist in Madras will be hired and trained for the fall. For Prineville, further planning is needed to determine what lab support might look like. We appreciate your proactive steps and suggest continued discussion about what roles might support that site.

In our DPR response meeting, we discussed what you meant by “evaluation of the lab support process” and meetings between faculty and lab staff that could improve communication and efficiency (DPR, p. 15). While occasional miscommunications are understandable, there may be opportunities to formalize processes, clarify responsibilities, and avoid scheduling labs immediately after lectures to allow set-up time. Coordinating equipment use and clearly defining roles (including involving your dean in these conversations) would support smoother operations. We also suggest sharing and discussing the job responsibilities of lab specialists for faculty and exploring whether periodic evaluations should be part of standard practice.

The department's use of OERs is appreciated, particularly the development of lab manuals. There are, however, concerns about the affordability and legal considerations of course packs, especially in the absence of a campus copy center. Copyrighted images present a potential issue, and we recommend connecting with librarian Kirstin Hostetler to clarify copyright law and digital accessibility requirements, especially with new legislation going into effect in April 2026.

Goals and needs

You have identified several goals and needs for the next five years.

Staffing

Staffing continues to be a high priority. Two adjuncts have been added for next year, and the department is encouraged to submit a request for a full-time, tenure-track faculty member in Nutrition for the next hiring cycle. We also encourage your continued collaboration with the HHP department on FN course offerings.

Online Distance Ed Support

Support for distance education is a clear need. We support exploring funding for part-time/adjunct faculty participation in “Knowledge Exchange” opportunities and aligning PIP goals to fund research on best practices in online teaching. We would also like to hear more about discipline-specific workshops on AI in Biology—an exciting and timely initiative.

Lab Support

With respect to lab support, the department has raised the possibility of a faculty liaison for the Madras laboratory. This role may include non-instructional duties and should be discussed in terms of expected responsibilities and load. Your department chair will provide a list of duties associated with this role. Training and meeting opportunities for part-time/adjunct faculty and lab staff could further strengthen lab operations.

OERs for Biology Courses

Lastly, we support continued efforts to secure state grant funding for open education resources (OER) and commend the department's role in building a STEM community. Support for Education Pathways, funding for consumable reagents, and the use of a dedicated lab supplies fund for experiential learning are all valuable initiatives. Exploring the implementation of a lab fee may be worth considering as a sustainable support mechanism.

Conclusion

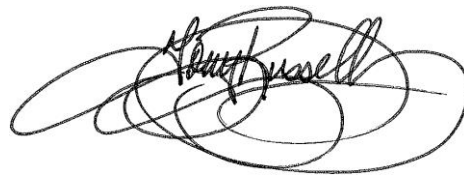
Thank you for your ongoing dedication to student readiness. Together, we can build on our achievements, address the challenges ahead, and meet the evolving needs of our students. If you have any questions or need

further clarification, please reach out. We look forward to working collaboratively to enhance the quality and impact of the Biology program.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Annemarie E. Hamlin". The signature is written in black ink on a light gray rectangular background.

Annemarie E. Hamlin
Vice President of Academic Affairs

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Russell". The signature is written in black ink and is highly stylized with many loops and flourishes.

Tony Russell
Instructional Dean