

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND RESEARCH AS PROGRAM REVIEW SUMMARY AND ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS



A. Summary of Program Strengths

- Budget externally funded by NSF (including indirect) so college can allocate other institutional funds;
- The program employs highly qualified and involved faculty;
- There are many student opportunities for research and seminars;
- Potential wages for graduates of the program are high;
- The program has high levels of community programs engagement;
- Diverse and highly qualified advisory committee;
- The program serves general education needs

B. Summary of Program Challenges

- Faculty turnover with reduced FTE is expected for the next year;
- Students entering the program are underprepared for coursework or not intending to complete the degree;
- Lack of recruitment strategies targeting STEM;
- It is still a new program continually developing as expected;
- Lab space limited for different kinds of student labs due to shared space with practicing researchers;
- Wide range of research topics causes challenges for faculty to mentor;
- Need better access to and better means to track the programmatic data;
- The program needs to balance need for student numbers and having stipulations for program enrollment

C. Actionable Insights

- Hire faculty with diverse backgrounds to fit the teaching requirements for the degree.
- The curriculum for the program needs to be refined to meet Environmental Science CIP.
- IR needs to make student data (enrollment, success, retention) more available to academic departments.
- Continued refinement of departmental research data and use.
- Investigate current lab use and improvement of use for Environmental Science program.
- Determine the feasibility of limiting research project topics to better manage mentoring and how that affects the need for expanding lab space
- Career Services confer with students in General Studies or with high math proficiency who may be good candidates for or have interest in STEM
- Retention and Activities Coordinator help with first-year advising
- Strategic Enrollment Plan includes a focus on STEM recruitment with retention services provided by the department and support services.
- Department will bring recommendations to Administration for next TCUP project.
- Better align faculty sharing across programs to leverage grant, teaching load, and offerings.
- Assess course loads considering lab times.

D. Program Action

- Retain program of study as is
- Expand program of study to another level, specialty, or delivery option
- Revise program of study to better meet the needs of students, current labor market or industry
- Consolidate program of study with another program
- Terminate program of study

E. Institutional Support Needed and/or Committed to Carry Out Action

- UTTC CFO will ensure college assumes 10% of the TCUP faculty salaries FY 2020-21;
- Student Activities and Retention Administrator will work with the program to help address retention and persistence;
- Career Services will work with students to identify those who may be interested in STEM career pathways;
- Office of Institutional Research will help the program study retention and persistence challenges;
- Dean of Instruction will assess course loads that consider lab times;
- College administration will provide feedback on recommendations for next TCUP project.

F. Follow Up

Follow Up Date: April 2021

Next Full Review Year: April 2023