

H.2. Summary of Matters Raised by the Independent Evaluator

Herewith is a summary of matters raised by the Independent evaluator regarding the program:			
	Program	Strengths	Limitations and Suggestions for Improvement
1	Agricultural Economics Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The program mission is well established and aligned with the CFAS. The program mission also serves as useful guide in evaluating program goals and objectives. 2. Teaching staff are highly qualified, experienced and dedicated. There is adequate facilities and equipment to support teaching and learning requirements of the program. In addition, there is strong evidence that faculty support for student learning and advice is highly adequate. 3. There is strong evidence that teaching staff have many published research and on-going research projects which support the university's strategic goal on research. The department has adequate laboratory space, equipment, library and IT resources to support research activities of faculty and students. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The number of student enrollees in the DAE program need to be addressed.</u> A more comprehensive plan to attract more students in the program has to be established. Appropriate targets need to be set, supported and monitored to achieve this goal. Otherwise, the major goals and objectives of the program will be difficult to achieve. 2. <u>Physical and human resources of the Quality Assurance (QA) Unit in the college as a whole need improvement.</u> At the department level, database needs to be systematically structured to ensure that statistical and qualitative data about the program could be traced and monitored for trend analyses benchmarking. 3. <u>The Program KPIs reflected in the report appear to be limited.</u> Out of the 34 NCAAA KPIs, only 9 have been identified in the report. Some statistical data about these KPIs are shown in the report. However, generally they lack a thorough analysis for these identified KPIs. It is strongly suggested that these KPIs be increased according to the NCAAA requirement and appropriate data be established. Benchmarking with other local and international institutions including trend analysis need to be conducted for all the identified KPIs.

			<p>4. <u>There are some sections in the SSR that are inconsistent with the SES report.</u> These need to be reviewed thoroughly and the differences rectified. In particular, these include Standard 2, 4, 7 and 8.</p> <p>5. <u>Use of Quality Reports for continuous quality improvement.</u> Evidence suggests that compliance to the use of quality assurance templates is well documented. These include program specification, course and field experience specifications including annual reports. However, it is surprising to find out that most of the annual reports are only submitted to the college up to the university level neither without having them reviewed and discussed within the department nor at the program level. Thus, no feedback is provided to the faculty regarding these annual reports. Largely, reviewing these annual reports would provide significant information regarding the extent learning outcomes are achieved. Thus, it is highly recommended that these reports be used to continuously improve the quality of program, identify strengths and limitations and address these limitations.</p> <p>6. <u>Tracking of and support for alumni need to be intensified.</u> Graduates of the DAE Program could serve as advocates to attract and recruit new students. Since these graduates could provide significant contributions in several ways, they should be continuously engaged and updated with the activities of the program.</p>
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2	Agricultural Engineering Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is strong evidence that the 3 major strategic goals of the university with respect to research, and publication, community service and quality teaching are well documented in the Agricultural Engineering Program. Achievements in these areas are highly commendable. 2. Teaching staff are highly qualified and experienced in their field of specialty to impart knowledge and hone the skills of the students in the Agricultural Engineering Program. 3. The laboratory facilities and equipment required for teaching, learning and research are well provided in the program. The equipment used in the laboratories are of high quality. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Although assessment of student learning outcomes appears to be sound, most of the assessment tools are conducted using a survey where opinions of students are sought. Other method of assessment using rubrics could be explored within the program. This will provide a more direct method in establishing the level and quality of performance of students. 2. Since some KPIs have established benchmarks within the program, it is recommended that benchmarking be conducted with other local and international institutions. In addition, trend analysis seems to be lacking for most of the identified KPIs. This needs to be established accordingly. 3. <u>Tracking of and support for alumni need to be intensified.</u> Graduates of the DAE Program could serve as advocates to attract and recruit new students. Since these graduates could provide significant contributions in several ways, they should be continuously engaged and updated with the activities of the program. 4. While the Learning Management System (LMS) is newly introduced in the college as well as the smart classroom equipment, their usage require a system of monitoring to ensure that both faculty and student will benefit with the new instructional technology aside from the more traditional forms of teaching. The effective use of the LMS could further enhance efficiency in communication between student and faculty especially in monitoring and providing feedback
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			<p>on student performance in every course.</p> <p>5. Based on interview with the faculty, internal communication system needs to be improved. Optimizing the use of electronic form of communication through an efficient intranet system could be enhanced.</p>
3	Agricultural Extension and Rural Society Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is strong evidence to show that students are provided with sufficient academic assistance and advice by the faculty to ensure their success in the program. In addition, student support services and learning resources are adequately provided within the academic program and students utilized accordingly. 2. Contributions of faculty to the community appear to be very substantial with regard to consulting services, educational and research activities in various areas of specialization affecting rural and farming communities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Although there is a quality assurance center at the college level, there is also need to establish a quality unit at the program level to provide continuous monitoring of quality assurance activities. Databases regarding quality assurance need to be established and organized to ensure that information could be used to analyze trends, make projections and perform benchmarking activities with comparable institutions outside the KSA. 2. With regard to continuous quality assurance system, program facilities and equipment require periodic maintenance and preventive assessment to ensure long term usage. This also includes risk management related to the use of chemicals and fire management and prevention. 3. The number of enrollees and graduates in the DAERS program has to be seriously addressed. A strategic plan has to be established, supported and monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved within a realistic timeframe.
4	Animal Production Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student learning outcomes are clearly specified and consistent with the NQF of the NCAAA. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In general, there is limited information provided for each subsection indicated in Section G

		<p>Teaching staff are highly qualified and experienced for the courses they teach. Learning objectives are aligned with teaching strategies and appropriate assessment tools are applied.</p> <p>2. Teaching staff are actively involved in research and scholarly activities. Further, there is high success in obtaining research grants and publications.</p>	<p>(Evaluation in Relation to Quality Standards), particularly for Standards 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 11. Reference should be made to KPIs where they are relevant to the concerned items. Specific data are needed to show trends, statistical data, figures derived from survey results. Conclusions need to be supported and benchmarked against other similar institutions where they are relevant.</p> <p>2. The low enrollment rate of students in the Animal Production Program needs to be seriously addressed. A comprehensive plan of action has to be formulated and supported by the College. Consequently, apparent completion rate (graduation rate) is adversely affected.</p> <p>3. Although student learning outcomes are appropriately specified in the course specifications, there is a need to directly measure learning outcomes other than the tradition forms of assessment such as the use of rubrics.</p> <p>4. Generally, although program managers seem to demonstrate a strong commitment to quality assurance, there is a need to improve the physical resources of the quality assurance unit in the college. In addition, a more systematic and organized system of quality assurance database should be set-up at the program level. Moreover, additional seminar workshops may be required for program managers and faculty to obtain more knowledge about the quality</p>
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			assurance system of the NCAAA.
5	Food Science and Nutrition Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuous quality improvement in teaching facilities and equipment is commendable. Significant improvements have been implemented to support the learning process in the classroom. These include an upgrade of network infrastructure, expanded internet bandwidth, smart classrooms and the LMS and e-learning portals including newly installed hardware and duly licensed software. The faculty should fully maximize this instructional technology in teaching. Program managers on the other hand, should continuously monitoring and assess the benefits of administrative support for continuous quality improvement in learning and teaching. 2. The program has a strong core of teaching staff that are highly qualified and experienced in their field. This is strategically important for achieving program goals and objectives. It fosters an intellectual environment by providing more knowledge and expertise in the delivery of learning objectives of the program and courses. 3. There is strong evidence that academic staffs are actively engaged in research. Further, there is high success rate in obtaining research grants and publications. Part of these research grants is the acquisition of new lab equipment for teaching and research. Largely, the department and the students benefit from these acquisitions. Students are able to utilize modern equipment to conduct research in their courses and reflect positively on the learning and teaching process. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. While there is strong commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement in the program, there is a need to establish a more systematic collection and maintenance of statistical and qualitative information about the program. Program managers have difficulty collecting information from one office to another since there is no central office to consolidate all information regarding the program. Thus, access to information appears to be difficult. 2. There is limited benchmarking and trend analysis on the identified KPIs reflected in the report considering that the program was established since 1965. Proper documentation on the achievements and initiatives for quality improvement should be well established. Along this line, since standard forms and survey instruments for quality assurance are used, statistical results need to be analyzed and used accordingly to draw plans for quality improvement. 3. The Food Science and Nutrition Program is considered as one of pioneer programs in the College as well as in KSU. Although many information could be accessed through in the Prince Salman University Library, it is recommended that a satellite library for the college be established not only to house a collection of titles and general references, journals and periodicals related to the programs

		<p>This is highly commendable.</p> <p>4. The contribution of teaching staff in the community is well documented. Providing services to the community is an integral part of the college strategic direction. Generally, teaching staff provide services through counseling, seminars, workshops, conferences and/or book writing. This is also commendable.</p>	<p>but also from different academic programs within the college. Since this may take time, the utilization of the University Library's automation system should be maximized to ensure an effective and efficient dissemination of information and interaction with users with regard to newly acquired books, journals, databases and other learning resources are observed.</p> <p>4. Aside from academic planning, program managers should also establish a system by which laboratory equipment used in the teaching and learning process are effectively maintained. A centralized maintenance unit could be established for all programs in the College instead of outsourcing. This will ensure that regular preventive maintenance of laboratory facilities and equipment is obtained.</p>
6	Plant Production Program	<p>1. There are sufficient facilities, equipment and other learning resources provided by the College to support quality of teaching and learning.</p> <p>2. Although the College gets financial support from the government budget, the department is able to generate income from various non-governmental sources such as research chairs, endowments, and donations and financed research to support teaching, and research activities of the faculty and students.</p> <p>3. The department has well experienced researchers with high number of ISI publications, joint projects with national and international institutions and</p>	<p>1. There is minimal information provided in many sub-sections of the report. More details have to be provided and articulated especially those that are numbered and with bullet items in Section G – Evaluation in Relation to Quality Standards.</p> <p>2. There is limited presentation on trend analysis and benchmarking in the key performance indicators mentioned in the report.</p> <p>3. Although student learning outcomes are appropriately specified in the program and course specifications, there is a need to directly measure learning outcomes other than the</p>

		<p>with highly equipped laboratories and well structured experimental research stations.</p>	<p>tradition forms of assessment such as the use of rubrics.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. There seems to be a steady decline in the number of enrollees in the program since 2006, even though the 3 bachelor programs were merged into one program which is Plant Production Sciences. Program managers have to address this issue more seriously. 5. There seems to be very limited participation of the alumni in promoting the Plant Production Sciences program. Alumni database has to be established.
7	Plant Protection Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classroom facilities and equipment are sufficiently provided to support quality teaching and learning. There is also sufficient number of laboratories to meet teaching and research requirements including newly installed smart boards, upgraded bandwidth and licensed software. 2. The department has produced well experienced researchers with high number of publications, joint projects, and has attracted a good number research funds from both public and private institutions. Part of these funds is used to buy modern equipment for teaching and research purposes. 3. Contributions of faculty members in community service appear to be well documented. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information seems to be limited in some sections of the report particularly in Section G – (Evaluation in Relation to Quality Standard), Standards 3, 4, 5 and 6. These sections need further articulation and discussion. 2. There is very limited presentation on trend analysis and benchmarking of key performance indicators mentioned in the report. 3. Although student learning outcomes are appropriately specified in the program and course specifications, there is a need to directly measure learning outcomes other than the tradition forms of assessment such as the use of rubrics. 4. There is a substantial decrease in the number of student enrollees the last 3 years from (AY 2010- onwards). Program managers have to

			<p>address this issue very seriously.</p> <p>5. Percentage of students who complete the program in minimum time is apparently low (27.3%) considering that students commencing in years 1 to 3 and going to year 4 is 100% as indicated in the report. No explanation is provided regarding this data.</p>
8	Soil Science Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. International accreditation. The Soil Science Program received ISO and AIC accreditation equivalence as with other academic programs within the College of Food and Agricultural Sciences. This is commendable. 2. Classroom and laboratory facilities of the Soil Science program are sufficiently adequate. Equipment used in these facilities are of high quality and they are regularly maintained. 3. Benchmarking arrangements with other referenced peer departments across the globe cover a wide range of approaches from electronic resources benchmarking to science and technology transfer benchmarking. This is highly commendable. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The number of student enrollees in the Soil Science Program need to be seriously addressed.</u> A more comprehensive plan to attract more students in the program has to be established. To date, no additional student has enrolled in the program for the last 5 years (since 2008). A comprehensive marketing plan and strategy has to be formulated with appropriate targets, substantial support and periodic assessment and monitoring to achieve this goal. At present, the department awaits the approval of the new program of the department (Bs in Soil and Water Program) from the University management. 2. Continuity of the English language at the university level. With the establishment of the Preparatory Year (PY) program in 2007, students are prepared to develop the skills in English, use of information technology, mathematics, and research. Based on interview session with a group of students from the different academic programs in the College which include the Soil Science program, the Prep Year is achieving its goal in preparing them for that purpose. Largely, English is the medium

			<p>of instruction in almost all courses provided to them. However, there is lack of continuity when students reach the college level where the medium of instruction is Arabic. This shift from using English to Arabic seems to defeat this purpose. Since English is the medium of instruction in many global colleges and universities and is widely used in world trade and industry, the college has to keep abreast with these global demands. Thus, the department may wish to consider reviewing instructional policy on the use of English in courses in the program including other academic programs in the college. The College strategic plan may also be reviewed in light of integrating the applications of English in the strategic goals and objectives of the college.</p> <p>3. Evidence suggests that compliance to the use of quality assurance templates of the NCAAA is well documented. The accomplished templates are submitted as reports to higher management. However, data obtained from these assessments should be used in planning for continuous quality improvement in learning and teaching. In addition, these quality improvements should be integrated into normal academic and administrative processes in the department.</p>
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