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### Curriculum Renewal and Alignment Expedited

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Public opinion pollsters, tuition watchdogs, accreditors, parents, employers, politicians, and other external voices clamor for colleges to change their curricula to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century needs, to be affordable, to be accountable, and to maintain American leadership. Voices within the college demand curricular upgrades to integrate new knowledge, adopt emerging technologies, attract excellent faculty, and compete successfully for students. Institutional strategic planning, budget constraints, and the continuous pursuit of excellence also prod curriculum development. Clearly college curricula are and will be the focus of review and renewal. Done well, changes enable colleges to keep the promises made to students, their families, and their stakeholders. As Robert Diamond (2011, p.3) noted, few activities have greater impact on students than curriculum design.

Curriculum development initiatives may come from outside the department, but its work commonly falls to department chairs, program directors, and others with oversight and influence (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002; Leaming, 1998; Eddy, 2010). Unfortunately, a review of the literature on the role of chairs and other academic leaders revealed few resources that clearly delineate the steps and deliverables needed to complete such a project within a reasonable time period with the resources available. Chairs and directors also need an approach that supports future iterations for continuous improvement.

Research tells us those directed to revise curricula often rely on past tactics that worked to comply with a mandate -- fitting new elements into existing patterns. Lattuca and Stark's (2009, p.2) review of curriculum change research found the most common form of change was akin to *tinkering*. One reason for this may be that not all faculty are eager to engage in program review and renewal, especially when linked to broad brushed attacks on college programs and traditional collegiate education. Leaming (1998, p.18) warns that some faculty, including influential senior faculty, may resist even minor changes. A process is needed that begins by articulating a program's current learning objectives, content, and so on, honoring the good and allowing the faculty to sort out, clarify, and collegially contribute their expertise to program improvement. Such a process has been used successfully with diverse disciplines including business, engineering, graphic arts, and education.

This presentation will introduce a curriculum review and renewal process that extracts and clarifies implied learning objectives, content, and other program elements and uses them as the basis for expedited curriculum renewal and alignment. The session has five parts:

1. An introduction and review of session goals
2. An interactive discussion of demands and obstacles to curriculum review and renewal
3. Overview of deliverables needed in iterative curriculum review and renewal
4. Participant experience working a case sample through the process steps: learning outcomes, content, assessment targets, standards alignment, etc.
5. Q and A session and Wrap-up.

Note: Supplemental materials will be provided that can be used in participants' home programs.