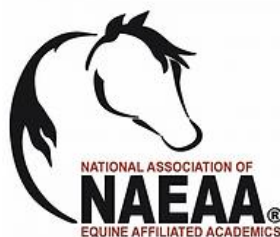# National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics (NAEAA)

Indicators of Excellence

in Equine Undergraduate Academics

This template document is designed for use in internal self-study and/or external peer review for undergraduate offerings affiliated with equine studies. The contents are centered around the five constructs of Standards of Excellence in Equine Undergraduate Education identified by NAEAA: Equine Student Knowledge and Skills; Critical Thinking and Communication; Trajectory of Graduates; Program Reputation; Program Sustainability.

The template focuses on data used as indicators of commitment to each of the standards. There are prescribed areas for data reporting and reflection along with ample space for programs to add in characteristics and data that are unique to their offerings. It is not expected that every category, section, or description within each of the five constructs will apply to every institution. Still, a commitment to each of the Standards is expected along with appropriate assessment measures, results, and reflections.

Academic Programs that submit for external review using this process in combination with a NAEAA approved peer reviewer, have the opportunity to earn NAEAA Certification for 'Commitment to NAEAA Standards of Excellence'.

NAEAA encourages and facilitates increased cooperation and information sharing on a national and international level between colleges and universities with programs in the equine discipline.

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Introduction/overview

The Value of a Program Review

NOTE – this section is in progress. *The concept of academic program review has been present in US Higher Education since the early 1970's when a movement began to 'make data-driven decisions regarding [academic program] effectiveness and sustainability, and report to stakeholders" (McGowan; Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice, and Research, Summer 2019 Vol. 9, No. 1: 53-67. DOI: 10.5929/9.1.1) A few additional excerpts from the referenced study include: "It is clear that accreditation and external pressures are forcing higher education to respond to calls for transparent and effective decision making…"; This study helps make clear that outcomes assessment, and its emphasis on data collection for decision-making purposes, has turned the tide from a best practice to an expected practice.*

History of the NAEAA Standards of Excellence

In 2010, members of the National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics engaged in a series of working sessions to develop an initial list of 'Indicators of Excellence (IOE)' for undergraduate programs of study in the equine discipline. That initial list was then used in a 2011 survey of members to gauge the level of importance of each indicator along with the ease in which respondents felt data could be gathered and used to assess both student and program success in each area. Through ongoing discussion and collaboration, five Standards of Excellence constructs were identified for building and evaluating programmatic excellence: Equine Student Knowledge and Skills; Critical Thinking and Communication; Trajectory of Graduates; Program Reputation; and Program Sustainability. In the self-study and/or external review process, each construct is evaluated by gathering, assessing, and reflecting on data that serves as Indicators of Excellence or IOEs. Additional discussions, workshops, input from working groups, and limited site application, resulted in an initial set of materials for self-study and/or academic review. More than ten years after the initial discussions, the materials have again been reviewed with updates geared towards streamlining the process for wider application and placing it into a guidebook format. The following individuals have been instrumental in the review and update: Dr. Karin Bump, Dr. Janice Holland, Dr. Lynn Taylor. This guidebook is now ready for member input for a renewed launch in 2022-2023.

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Equine Program Definition

For purposes of this document 'equine program' refers to any undergraduate academic program affiliated with equine studies.

How to use this Document

This template document is designed to provide a voluntary self-study and/or external peer review guidebook for undergraduate equine programs. As such, the document is broad-based to accommodate the diversity of undergraduate program offerings within the equine discipline, while staying focused on the five constructs of Standards of Excellence in Equine Undergraduate Education identified by NAEAA: Equine Student Knowledge and Skills; Critical Thinking and Communication; Trajectory of Graduates; Program Reputation; Program Sustainability.

The document begins with an overall look at the institution and program with a focus on gathering information and materials that are Indicators of Excellence (IOE's) for the constructs of Program Sustainability and Program Reputation (Section 1). Moving into Section II, the materials delve deeper into the curriculum including graduate trajectory. This is the section that gathers IOE materials for Equine Student Knowledge and Skills; Critical Thinking and Communication; and Trajectory of Graduates. Evaluation areas are identified for each IOE along with space to individualize evaluation areas according to the focus of each program. FAQs are included at the start of each section and include suggestions and recommendations on how to approach the section as well as where to look for key data.

In working through the document, there may be an IOE section or category of information that does not apply to your program or your institution. If/when that happens, the self-study author(s) should note this with an explanation as to why this is the case. There may also be places for which data has not been gathered. If/when that happens, this should again be noted along with an explanation as to why this is the case and what plans are in place to have that information in the next 1-3 years.

There is no one best approach to beginning this work. Yet, starting is key! Some programs begin by having a single person (usually a department or program chair) write a working draft document and then begin review and discussions with members of the program team. Some spread out the work, combine sections to a draft document and then begin review and discussions. Another approach is to begin with department discussions on each section capturing key thoughts and information that then form an initial draft. Again, the important part is to begin. Work on a self-study is typically done within 6months to 1year. However, if a program has had a lapse of time between self-studies and/or does not already have a student learning outcomes assessment plan, it can take up to two years.

When completed, the self-study provides a wealth of information beneficial for curriculum improvement, student recruitment, and student retention. It also serves as a historical document capturing key events that can otherwise be lost. The work of a self-study is most meaningful

when this is purposely imbedded and reinforced at the front of the work – they 'why' of a self-study placed on the benefits rather than just the process.

Guidelines for External Reviewer Selection and Compensation

While a single external reviewer can be used, a more common and holistic model is to select 2-3 individuals to work as a review team. One of the team members will take - or be assigned - the Lead role which includes completion of the written evaluation that is submitted to the institution. Submission normally occurs 1-2 months after completion of the site visit.

Reviewers should be recognized experts in the discipline or professional field of the program under review. Where there are specific subsets within the program (example, a BS in Animal Science that also has a Therapeutic Riding curriculum), care should be taken to have someone on the team with experience in the subset areas. Alternatively, a program can request a review of the primary program only. The focus of the review should be made clear at the time of reviewer selection, and then again, the day the site visit begins.

Compensation rates for external reviewers varies among institutions yet a general range is between $200 and $500 (for a 1 ½ to 2-day review), with additional compensation for the Lead reviewer who is charged with writing the formal evaluation. This rate assumes that all travel, lodging, and meals are covered by the institution that hires the reviewer.

NAEAA can assist in identifying professionals that would be well suited to the discipline or professional field that will be reviewed. Please contact Dr. Karin Bump if assistance is desired: Dr.Kbump@gmail.com

Guidelines for Reviewers

Taking on a program review is a significant commitment and one that should not be taken lightly. Prior to acceptance, consideration should be given to the type of program to be reviewed, skills and knowledge with the review process, and any areas that could pose conflicts of interest.

Prior to arrival on campus, the reviewer should have been provided with a current self-study document for the program. The document should arrive no later than one month prior to the site visit to ensure adequate time for review.   The agenda for the site visit is normally set by the institution and arrives closer to the site visit dates. If, upon reviewing the agenda, there are specific areas of importance to the review that are not included, this should be raised prior to the visit to see if arrangements can be made to adjust the schedule accordingly.

Reviewers are to bring an open and informed approach to the assessment of the program, working to mitigate bias and any areas that would be self-serving. The team should provide critical insight and response relative to the program self-study with careful attention to the direction of the program and its positioning relative to trends and emerging opportunities in the discipline and industry. Questions raised by the reviewers should focus on information directly related to the review process to ensure avoidance of time spent on areas that relate solely to a reviewer's interests or curiosities.

At the conclusion of the site review, a written report is prepared reflecting on the material provided within the self-study and important themes that occurred during site visit meetings. The final report should include all sections of the 'reviewer commendations and recommendations' section and then a final summary piece that highlights overall Commendations and Recommendations. Often these are areas that emerged as themes throughout each section of the report. Recommendations should be listed in order of importance including the use of high; moderate; and lower to signify level of urgency in addressing. For example, a site review that identifies any areas of danger to individuals and animals would be in the high category along with other recommendations that need to be addressed either immediately or within the next 6 months. The Lead for the review team is responsible for writing the final document, while each reviewer is responsible for contributing to the document and providing a careful review/edit of the draft prior to submission.

Professionalism in terms of confidentiality is part of the review process. There may be times during the site visit that an individual asks that their direct comments not be included in the report. This does not mean that the message cannot be included – and if it is important, it needs to be included. Still, care should be taken on when and how that information appears in the report. Confidentiality also refers to the members of the review team. While sharing that you were on a review team for X program is fine, sharing any *specific* results and/or findings is rarely acceptable outside the intended audience.

FAQs

How often should a self-study be completed?
It is recommended that programs complete a formal self-study every 5-7 years with an interim assessment at the half-way mark. Self-studies are also recommended at any point that a program is considering change in curriculum and/or seeking funds for significant investment into facilities and/or infrastructure.

How often should an external review be completed?
External reviews are optimally placed after completion of each formal self-study.

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How does a program request review for consideration of earning NAEAA Certification?
This section is in progress.

What if a program already has self-study and/or student learning outcome assessment document(s) – does this template have to be followed?
Yes and No. Programs requesting review for consideration of Certification do have to address all applicable areas within the Indicators of Excellence Guidebook. However, existing program documents can be included/ modified/ referred to as appropriate to simplify the work.

Where can I get help?

NAEAA will be offering professional development opportunities for those new to the program review process and/or wanting to become a program reviewer for NAEAA Certification. Please email Dr.Kbump@gmail.com if you are interested in this opportunity.

Section I – Institution and Equine Program Overview: Program Reputation and Program Sustainability IOE's

This section is designed to collect key information that provides an overview description of the type of institution, nature of program, and approach to student and learning. Material in Section 1 pertains to the IOE's of **Program Reputation** *and* **Program Sustainability.**

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Section I.A   General College and Program Information

FAQ: Why am I collecting this information? General information regarding the college is important to gather and share in order to establish an understanding of the nature of the institution and how/where the equine program fits. From an external review standpoint, this information also provides context for the program information that will follow.

FAQ: How does this apply to the IOE's? Beyond establishing a common base of understanding, the information is helpful in considering the constructs of Program Reputation and Program Sustainability.

FAQ: Where am I likely to find this information? This information is typically housed in the admission, registrar, and or institutional research offices

FAQ: What if I can't find this information? If there are places where information is unknown/not gathered, please note this in the section along with plans to ensure that the information will be gathered and available within the next two years.

A. College/University Mission. In the space below, please provide the College/University's Mission Statement. Vision Statement and link to the College/ University Strategic Plan can also be included.

B. Categorization of College/University. Please highlight each category option that applies to your institution.

Category	Options	Options	Options	Options
Designation	College	University		
Profit Status	Profit	Non-profit		
Public or Private	Public	Private		
Specialty/Academic Focus	Broad-based/Non-specialty	Liberal Arts	Vocational-technical & Career College	Community

	Polytechnic Institute			
Specialty Focus	Single-Sex	Religious Affiliation	Specialized Mission	N/A
Degree Available	2-year degree	4-year degree	Combination (graduate/undergraduate)	Certification
Undergraduate student body	1-2,000	2,000-3,000	3,000-4,000	4,000-5,000
Total of FT and PT Students	5,000-10,000	10,000-20,000	20,000-40,000	>40,000

C. Equine Program Overview

- *Program Mission/Goals/Learning Outcomes*. Please provide each (as applicable) and describe how these link/support the College/University Mission.

- *Brief Program History*. Include a brief history of the academic program at your institution.

- *Equine Related Degrees/Academic Programs*. Include the title and catalog description of the majors, minors, and concentrations, and/or certificates available within the program.
    Majors

    Concentrations/Specialization

    Minors

    Certificate

- *Credit breakout for Equine Related Degrees/Academic Programs*. For each program identified above , list the title in the far-left column and then the credits for each area in the spaces that follow.

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Program Title	Science-Based Credits	Horsemanship, Training, Equitation-Based Credits	Management-Based Credits	Business-Based Credits	Equine-Assisted/ Therapeutic Credits	General Education/ Core Curriculum Credits	Open Elective Credits	Other credits (specify area)	Total required credits

Additional Educational Opportunities.

Non-Classroom Curriculum

Activity	Opportunity Offered (Yes/No)	Activity Assessed (Yes/No)	% of students completing annually
Undergraduate Research			
Internship/Co-Op[1]			
Independent Study[2]			
Community Service Project			
Undergraduate Presentations			
Student Portfolio			
Therapeutic/Equine Assisted			
Volunteer work in equine area			
Study Abroad			
Other			

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[1]Internship/Co-Op – applied experiential educational opportunity.
[2]Independent Study - an academic course that is non-traditionally offered and conducted by an instructor.

Experiential Education

Activity	Opportunity Offered (Yes/No)	Activity (Yes/No)	% of students involved annually
Riding Teams			
Riding Clubs			
Hosting of Events (shows, clinics, seminars)			
Judging Teams			
Other:			
Other:			

D. Tuition and Enrollment:

- Tuition:
- Room and Board:
- Additional fees applied to equine courses (if applicable):
- Average 'discount' (grants, scholarships, awards) resulting in typical 'net tuition':
- Average debt load of graduating students (overall):
- Average debt load of graduating students (equine):
- Total number of students applying to the equine program for each of the past three years:

- % equine program acceptance rate for past three years:
- % of equine program enrollment rate (acceptance to enrollment past drop/add period) for past three years:
- % equine program persistence to year 2 enrollment:
- Describe any internal and/or external factors impacting on equine program enrollment patterns for the past three years:

E. Assessment and Accreditation Background:

- Accrediting association for Institution:
- Date of last Institutional accreditation:
- Any additional accreditations related to the equine program:
- Date of last external equine program review:
- Recommendations and program changes since last equine program review:
- Please provide HEGIS (Higher Education General Information System) codes for registered degrees/majors:

F. Budget and Finance

- Describe the way in which budgeting for the academic program is carried out and managed along with related figures
- Describe the way in which budgeting for the academic program is carried out and managed along with related figures
- If there is an equine program fee applied annually or by semester, please describe each (with figures) and how the funds are collected and allocated
- If there are any course fees applied to equine program fees applied annually or by semester, please describe each (with figures) and how the funds are collected and allocated

Equestrian Facilities

- Describe the way in which budgeting for the equestrian facilities is carried out and managed along with related figures.
- Are facilities considered cost centers or revenue centers? Please answer and explain.
- Has a cost analysis been conducted on the equestrian centers? If yes, please describe and provide applicable figures.
- How is the equestrian facility staffed (FT, PT, student workers (paid), student workers (work study), other – please describe including figures as applicable.

Riding Teams and/or Equine Clubs

- Describe the way in which budgeting for teams and clubs is carried out and managed along with related figures.
- Are teams organized under the equine program or the athletic program? Please answer and explain.

Horse Herd

- Describe the way in which budgeting for horse herds is carried out and managed along with related figures.

Finance overview comments:

- What are the strengths and challenges associated with current budget and finance process and figures?

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Section 1. A. SWOT Analysis Using the information provided in this section; identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that emerge through a review of general institution and equine program information. Keep in mind that this section pertains to the IOE's of **Program Reputation** and **Program Sustainability**

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

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Reviewer Commendations and Recommendations:

Notes to Reviewers:

- Consider the following areas as you develop commendations and recommendations related to this section:
- Size and nature of equine program in comparison to overall institution
- Credit distribution within equine program in comparison to program description and mission
- Enrollment patterns, cost of tuition, and debt load
- Financial planning and budgeting, along with involvement of equine program members/transparency across the department.
- Keep in mind that this section pertains to **Program Reputation** and **Program Sustainability** IOE's.

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Section 1. B Equine Faculty Profile

FAQ: Why am I gathering this information: Providing a profile of the faculty teaching within the equine program establishes an understanding of the background and experiences of those delivering and assessing the teaching and learning outcome environment. From an external review standpoint, this information also provides context for the academic curriculum and learning outcomes information that will follow.

FAQ: Where am I likely to find this information? This information is likely housed with the program area department and/or the office of academic affairs. It is also material that can be provided directly by the faculty within the program.

FAQ: What if I can't find this information? If there are places where information is unknown/not gathered, please note this in the section along with plans to ensure that the information will be gathered and available within the next two years.

A. Equine Program Faculty Numbers for Past 3 years

- Total number of FT faculty dedicated to equine program
- Total number of FT faculty teaching within program but dedicated to a different program
- Total number of PT faculty teaching
- FT faculty to student ratio for equine program:
- FT faculty to student ratio of institution:
- Describe equine program faculty recruitment and retention over the past 5 years:

B. Program Faculty Demographics. List in order of rank: Full-time Faculty (Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Instructors), Part-time Faculty, and Adjunct Faculty that have taught in the past three years.

Name	Rank/Tier	Hire Year	Degree(s) earned	Primary field(s) of study	University/Universities where degrees(s) earned	Courses typically taught

C. Evidence of Training and Experience. If a faculty member is teaching outside their primary field(s) of study OR is teaching without a terminal degree (professionally qualified rather than academically qualified) please provide additional evidence of qualifications:

Evidence of Faculty Training and Experience		
Faculty Member's Name	**Training and Experience**	

D. Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness, Scholarship, and Service. Provide information that can be helpful in considering effectiveness of Full time and Key Part Time faculty members teaching in the program. It is anticipated that this information can come from annual faculty reports/reviews .

Faculty Member	Teaching Effectiveness Frequency of course evaluations	Date of last peer review	Professional Scholarship Highlights from last 3 years	Service to College Key roles	Active professional connections/service to the areas within their teaching load.	Key strengths and areas for improvement from most recent peer reviews (at least 2)

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E. Workloads of Faculty in the Program. Summarize the workloads of each Faculty member in the program by completing the table below.

	Workloads of Program Faculty						
Faculty member	Annual teaching load – in # of courses	Annual teaching load – in # of credits/units	Annual teaching load – in # of total students	Annual teaching load – in # of contact /teaching hours	Average # of advisees per year	# of committee/ service work hours per year	Other Required Duties

F. Other key attributes:
- Professional Development – describe the funds available for professional development along with the process to receive those funds.
- Peer Reviews – describe the frequency and process of peer reviews along with how peer reviews are used for faculty development
- Teaching Effectiveness – describe the process used to assess and ensure effective teaching.
- Comparable programs - Identify three equine programs at peer institutions that you feel are comparable to your offerings.

Section 1.B. SWOT Analysis Using the information provided in this section; identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that emerge through a review of general program and faculty information. Keep in mind that this section pertains to the IOE's of **Program Reputation** and **Program Sustainability**

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	**Threats**

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Reviewer Commendations and Recommendations:

Note to Reviewers - Consider the following as you consider commendations and recommendations related to this section:

- To what extent does it appear that faculty have appropriate academic preparation, professional training, and experience to provide teaching and learning instruction in their typical course load?
- To what extent is it apparent that faculty remain current in their discipline?
- To what extent is there evidence that the faculty are directly connected to the industries within which graduates of the program would be employed?
- To what extent does it seem that faculty workload is comparable to other institution's equine programs as well as equitable across this institution?
- Is the data provided on teaching effectiveness appropriate to ensuring a regular review, as well as demonstrating commitment to continual improvement of the program?
- Does it appear that there is an appropriate mix of academically and professionally qualified faculty?
- Is there evidence that the institution appropriately supports faculty development activities that provide a benefit to the program?
- Keep in mind that this section pertains to the IOE's of **Program Reputation** and **Program Sustainability**

Section 1. C. Student Profile

FAQ: Why am I collecting this information? General information regarding student profile is important to gather and share in order to establish an understanding of students attending the institution overall, as well as within the equine program. From an external review standpoint, this information also provides context for the teaching and learning outcomes assessment information that will follow.

FAQ: How does this apply to the IOE's? Beyond establishing a common base of understanding, the information is helpful in considering the constructs of Program Reputation and Program Sustainability.

FAQ: Where am I likely to find this information? This information is typically housed in the admission and/or registrar offices.

FAQ: What if I can't find this information? If there are places where information is unknown/not gathered, please note this in the section along with plans to ensure that the information will be gathered and available within the next two years.

A. Admission Requirements – in the space below, please provide admission requirements (GPA, Standardized Scores, etc.) for the institution followed by any specific admission requirements for the equine program:

B. GPA Demographics – using the table below, please provide the average GPA of overall incoming students, and then average GPA of incoming students to the equine program.

Average High School GPAs of First Year Students		
	Overall incoming student GPA	Incoming equine student GPA
Current Year		
One year prior		
Two years prior		
Three years prior		
Four years prior		

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C. Student Profile Characteristics:

Using demographic profile information collected by your institution, provide the age, gender, race and ethnicity characteristics of the entering classes for the past three years.

- Entering students (institution)
- Entering students (equine program)

D. Program Enrollment Profile and Graduation Rates: Using the table below, please provide the total number of equine program students in each year for the past five years.

Year	Total Number 1st yr. students	Total Number 2nd yr. students	Total Number 3rd yr. students	Total Number 4th yr. students	Total Number 5th yr. students	Total Number Graduating
Current Year						
One year prior						
Two years prior						
Three years prior						
Four years prior						

E. Diversity within the Academic Program –

- Please use this space to describe diversity in your equine program using language and metrics that align with your institutions DEI policies and practices.

- In what ways is the description of diversity in your program, similar/different than diversity in the full undergraduate body at your institution?

- In the next year, are you planning on instituting any intentional efforts to broaden efforts to purposely recruit a more diverse student body?

F. Incoming Student Equine Experiences:

In the space below, describe the prior equine experience of incoming students to your program. Include any changes over the past five years. Please focus on prior skills and knowledge, understanding of the equine industry, preparation to be successful in the program. Where applicable, include how this knowledge was assessed, i.e., was it a survey, essay, skills test upon entering, etc.

Section 1.C. SWOT Analysis – Student Profile: Using the information provided in this section; identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that emerge through a review of student profile information. Keep in mind that this section pertains to **Program Reputation** and **Program Sustainability** IOE's.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	**Threats**

Reviewer Commendations and Recommendations:

Notes to reviewers - Consider the following areas as you offer commendations and recommendations related to this section:

- In what ways does the equine program student profile compare/contrast to overall student profile?
- In what ways does the equine program student profile compare/contrast to other equine programs?
- In what ways does the equine program student profile compare/contrast to the equine industry?
- In what ways does the size and diversity of the program align with institutional goals and commitments?
- To what extent does it appear that the equine program student profile is a good match for the goals and approach of the equine program offerings? This includes consideration of retention and persistence to graduation.
- Keep in mind that this section pertains to the **Program Reputation** and **Program Sustainability** IOE's.

Section II. Equine Knowledge and Skills; Critical Thinking and Communication; and Trajectory of Graduates

Section II primarily pertains to the IOEs of: **Equine Knowledge and Skills**; **Critical Thinking and Communication**; and **Trajectory of Graduates.** For these IOEs, the extent to which each is successfully addressed is based on benchmarks, learning outcome goals, assessment measures, and learning outcome results. While the IOEs areas are pre-determined by NAEAA, the leaning outcome benchmarks, goals and methods of assessment are determined by each institution.

Example – IOE: **Equine Knowledge and Skills**

Step 1: Identify the Learning Outcome Goal (LOG) in measurable terms making it possible to provide evidence it has been learned/reinforced/mastered.
- Examples of LOG:
    - ✓ get a passing grade (65% or higher) on the Horse Care Skills assessment rubric
    - ✓ get an average grade (75% or higher) Horse Care Skills assessment rubric
    - ✓ get a proficient grade (80 or 85%) Horse Care Skills assessment rubric
    - ✓ get a perfect score (100% - not often used but can be) Horse Care Skills assessment rubric

Step 2: Identify a Benchmark percentage for the expectation of students that will be able to complete/master the skill/information that will be assessed in the LOG.
- Example Benchmark - 80% of the students will be able to meet the Learning Outcome Goal for the Horse Care Skills assessment rubric

Step 3: For each LO, indicate the method/tool and location used for assessing whether the LOG was achieved. Also include the frequency with which this assessment occurs per student: one time, repeated in several courses (identify which), annual (identify how), etc. Where applicable, examples of assessment rubrics should be supplied in an Appendix.

- EXAMPLE Method of assessment: Horse Care Skills assessment rubric used in two required courses: Introduction To Equine Health (EQ110) in Fall Term Freshman Year, Equine Disease Management (EQ430) in Fall Term Senior Year.

Step 4: Report the results of the assessment.

- EXAMPLE result: In the Fall of 2022, the benchmark goal was met with 80% of students (*the benchmark*) earning an average grade or higher (*the LOG*) on the Horse Care Skills assessment rubric administered in EQ110; 90% of students in EQ 430 earned an average grade or higher. Assessment Rubric is provided in the Appendix.

Step 5: If a Learning Outcome Goal is not met, identify the specific plan for improvement in future courses as well as any remedial work for students whose assessment lands below the defined goal.

- EXAMPLE **result**: In the Fall of 2022, the benchmark goal was not met as only 70% of students (*the benchmark*) earning an average grade or higher (*the LOG*) on the Horse Care Skills assessment rubric. Assessment Rubric is provided in the Appendix.

- EXAMPLE **action**: Supplemental workshops were held for students falling below the LOG; Faculty reflected on results with discussion on how to adjust teaching and learning in order to successfully meet Benchmark and LOG in future years.

Section II. A: IOE: Equine Knowledge and Skills

FAQ: Why am I collecting this information? Measuring and reporting on areas within the IOE of Equine Skills and Knowledge provides a look at the ways in which students are meeting the goals and objectives of the curriculum.   The common set of areas provides context that is comparable across similar institutions and programs committed to excellence in their equine undergraduate offerings. Unique areas identified by the equine program provide a look at other learning features important to the program.

FAQ: Where am I likely to find this information? This information is typically provided by the equine department chair and faculty.

FAQ: What if I can't find this information? If there are places where information is unknown/not gathered, please note this in the section, along with plans to ensure that the information will be gathered and available within the next two years.

FAQ – Do I have to use this reporting format? If you already have a written Student Learning Outcome (SLO) plan you can use that for this section. If there are suggested NAEAA skills/knowledge areas that your curriculum does not address (or are not in your SLO), you should address those separately. If you do not have a written SLO – the prescriptive format of this section will help you create one. ***Note that this FAQ applies to all areas in Section II.***

Using the table below (or another format of your choosing), identify the class and/or activity through which each IOE knowledge area is introduced, reinforced, and where mastery is assessed. When possible, provide syllabi and examples of outcomes assessment tools in the Appendix. If an area is not addressed within the curriculum, please place NA in the table and the subsequent area questions. Please note that the prescribed areas within the table were determined from NAEAA member input as being important across program types. Space is provided within the table for the addition of program specific equine skills and knowledge areas critical to the nature of the program. Examples could include: riding, training, breeding, genetics as well as business or finance areas.

	NAEAA Indicator of Excellence: Equine Skills and Knowledge								
	Demonstrates competence in basic equine health care	Demonstrates competence in safety and handling of equines	Demonstrates competence in equine nutrition	Demonstrates understanding of equine welfare and ethical practices	Demonstrates knowledge of equine anatomy and physiology	Demonstrates …	Demonstrates…	Demonstrates…	Demonstrates…
Where introduced									

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Where reinforced									
Where proficiency determined									

1. Demonstrates competence in basic equine health care:
    a. Learning Outcome Goal:
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:
2. Demonstrates competence in safety and handling of equines:
    a. Learning Outcome Goal:
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:
3. Demonstrates competence in equine nutrition:
    a. Learning Outcome goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:
4. Demonstrates understanding of equine welfare and ethical practices:
    a. Learning Outcome goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

5. Demonstrates knowledge of equine anatomy and physiology:
    a. Learning Outcome goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:
6. Demonstrates…
    a. Learning Outcome Goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:
7. Demonstrates…
    a. Learning Outcome Goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:
8. Demonstrates…
    a. Learning Outcome Goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

A final assessment measure: Identify the ways in which incoming and exiting knowledge in equine skills and knowledge is assessed, shared, and used for ongoing programmatic improvements:

Section II A. SWOT Analysis for Equine Knowledge and Skills: Using the information provided in this section; identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that emerge for this IOE.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	**Threats**

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Reviewer Commendations and Recommendations:

Notes to reviewers - Consider the following areas as you offer commendations and recommendations related to this section:

- Appropriateness of target goal assigned to each LOG
- Appropriateness of rigor applied to each LOG in relationship to program mission and objectives
- Approach to assessing each learning outcomes area in order to gather realistic and reliable results
- Results of LOG assessment in relationship to program mission and objectives along with anticipated graduate trajectories
- Appropriateness of Plans for Improvement if/when LOG targets are not met

Section II. B. IOE: Critical Thinking and Communication

FAQ: Why am I collecting this information? Measuring and reporting on areas within the IOE of Critical Thinking and Communication provides a look at the ways in which students are meeting the goals and objectives of the curriculum.   This IOE is often considered under 'soft skills' repeatedly identified as important to employers. The common set of areas provides context that is comparable across similar institutions and programs committed to excellence in their equine undergraduate offerings. Unique areas identified by the equine program provide a look at other learning features important to the program.

FAQ: Where am I likely to find this information? This information is typically provided by the equine department chair and faculty yet can also be considered through conversations regarding assessment measures across other departments that hold required courses within the curriculum.

FAQ: What if I can't find this information? If there are places where information is unknown/not gathered, please note this in the section along with plans to ensure that the information will be gathered and available within the next two years.

Using the table below (or another format of your choosing), identify the class and/or activity through which each IOE area is introduced, reinforced, and where mastery assessed. When possible, provide syllabi and examples of outcomes assessment tools in the Appendix. If an area is not addressed within the curriculum, please place NA in the table and the subsequent area questions.

	NAEE Indicator of Excellence Learning: Critical Thinking and Communication								
	Demonstrates Competence in Reasoning	Demonstrates Competence in Information Literacy	Demonstrates Competence in Oral Communication	Demonstrates Competence in Written Communication	Demonstrates Competence in Communication with Professionals	Demonstrates Competence in Communication with Peers	Demonstrates Competence in Use of Industry Terminology	Demonstrates Competence in Ethical Decision Making	
Where introduced									
Where reinforced									
Where proficiency determined									

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1. Demonstrates competence in reasoning (utilizing information and applying it to decision making)
   a. Learning Outcome Goal:
   b. Benchmark:
   c. Method(s) of assessment:
   d. Results of assessment:
   e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

2. Demonstrates competence in finding and using information that is seen as trusted and relevant (information literacy)
   a. Learning Outcome Goal
   b. Benchmark:
   c. Method(s) of assessment:
   d. Results of assessment:
   e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

3. Demonstrates competence in oral communication
   a. Learning Outcome Goal
   b. Benchmark:
   c. Method(s) of assessment:
   d. Results of assessment:
   e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

4. Demonstrates competence in written communication
   a. Learning Outcome Goal
   b. Benchmark:
   c. Method(s) of assessment:
   d. Results of assessment:
   e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

5. Demonstrates competence in communication with professionals
   a. Learning Outcome Goal

    b.   Benchmark:

    c.   Method(s) of assessment:

    d.   Results of assessment:

    e.   Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

6. Demonstrates competence in communication with peers
    a. Learning Outcome Goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

7. Demonstrates competence in use of industry terminology
    a. Learning Outcome Goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

8. Demonstrates competence in ethical decision making
    a. Learning Outcome Goal
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if LOG is not met:

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Section II B. SWOT Analysis Critical Thinking and Communication

Using the information provided in this section; identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that emerge for this IOE.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	**Threats**

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Reviewer Commendations and Recommendations:

Notes to reviewers - Consider the following areas as you offer commendations and recommendations related to this section:

- Appropriateness of target goal assigned to each LOG
- Appropriateness of rigor applied to each LOG in relationship to program mission and objectives
- Approach to assessing each learning outcomes area in order to gather realistic and reliable results
- Results of LOG assessment in relationship to program mission and objectives along with anticipated graduate trajectories
- Appropriateness of Plans for Improvement if/when LOG targets are not met

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Section II. C. IOE: Trajectory of Graduates from the Program

FAQ: Why am I collecting this information? Measuring and reporting on areas within the IOE of Graduate Trajectory provides a look at the ways in which students are graduating with the skills and knowledge to pursue careers and/or graduate school upon degree completion. The pressures on higher education to track, assess, and share this information is only expected to increase. While institutions have long gathered this information on the graduating study body as a whole, it is imperative that career focused programs have systematic processes to gather this information in a way that can be extrapolated specifically to equine programs – and include information key to the mission, goals and objectives of the equine program.

FAQ: Where am I likely to find this information? This is typically the most challenging IOE for which to locate information. Most institutions have career, alumni and/or institutional advancements offices that gather this information for the institution as a whole. Equine program faculty should work with those offices to identify what historical information is available and how the equine graduate information can be extrapolated and shared. Few have a systematic process to gather program specific data yet it is important to begin this process if it is not already in place.   At minimum, equine program faculty and staff should be able to gather and provide anecdotal data during first use of the IOE document.

FAQ: What if I can't find this information? If there are places where information is unknown/not gathered, please note this in the section, along with plans to ensure that the information will be gathered and available within the next two years.

A. Internship Site Feedback (if internships are part of the program)
- ✓ Yes/No – are internships required in this program?
- ✓ Yes/No – are internships elective but strongly required in this program?
- ✓ Yes/No – are internship supervisors asked to complete an evaluation of student knowledge and skills?

1. Satisfaction of students with internship site placement
   a. Outcome Goal:
   b. Benchmark:
   c. Method(s) of assessment:
   d. Results of assessment:
   e. Plan for improvement if OG is not met:

2. Satisfaction of internship sites with student performance

    a. Outcome Goal:

    b. Benchmark:

    c. Method(s) of assessment:

    d. Results of assessment:

    e. Plan for improvement if OG is not met:

3. Extent to which industry seeks interns from your program

    a. Outcome Goal:

    b. Benchmark:

    c. Method(s) of assessment:

    d. Results of assessment:

    e. Plan for improvement if OG is not met:

Graduating Student Feedback

Please describe tools used to gather feedback from students at point of graduation. Include in description the tool(s) used, who administers, and key findings.

Alumni Feedback

Please describe tools used to gather feedback from alumni at point of graduation. Include in description the tool(s) used, who administers, and key findings.

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1. Employment rate of graduates
    a. Outcome Goal:
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if OG is not met:

2. Employment rates of graduates within their field of study
    a. Outcome Goal:
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if OG is not met:

3. Continuing education rate of graduates
    a. Outcome Goal:
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if OG is not met:

4. Satisfaction of graduates with employment/continuing education
    a. Outcome Goal:
    b. Benchmark:
    c. Method(s) of assessment:
    d. Results of assessment:
    e. Plan for improvement if OG is not met:

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Employer Feedback

Please describe tools used to gather feedback from alumni at point of graduation. Include in description the tool(s) used, who administers, and key findings.

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Section II C. SWOT: Trajectory of Graduates from the Program

Using the information provided in this section; identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that emerge for this IOE.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	**Threats**

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Reviewer Commendations and Recommendations:

Notes to reviewers - Consider the following areas as you offer commendations and recommendations related to this section:

- This is typically the most challenging section to complete. Yet, this kind of data is increasingly important for transparency to students, families and stakeholders.
- Graduating Student data is typically available in some form. It may be full institutional data and not specific to equine. However, most institutions will be able to separate data out by major. If this information is not provided in the self-study, reviewers are urged to ask for it during the site visit. Often external review teams requests can result in the data being provided.
- If the equine program is not collecting data from graduating students regarding satisfaction with preparation for careers/further education and plans post-graduation, this should be added to the list of recommendations.
- Alumni data falls into the same category of graduating student data in terms of typical accessibility during a first external review.
- If the equine program is not collecting data from program alumni regarding satisfaction with preparation for careers/further education and post-graduation career trajectory, this should be added to the list of recommendations. Alumni data is typically gathered 2-3 years post-graduation and then in 5-year cycles.
- Internship data should be available for students during internships. Examine the assessment tool to determine if it is a general tool used across programs at the institution OR if it is specific to equine. If there are not areas specific to learning outcome goals for the equine program, those should be added and become part of the recommendations.
- Employer (including graduate school) satisfaction with alumni is critically important. Yet, it is rarely systematically gathered. As part of the commitment to NAEAA Standards of Excellence, data collection from employers should be part of assessing equine programs learning outcome goals related to preparation for careers and/or further education.
- Data collection in the IOE of graduate trajectory can be incredibly time consuming – particularly at the start. Recommendations from the review team on including this as part of the workload of the alumni office and/or institutional research is encouraged. Alternatively, recommendations for reduction in workload for a faculty member with skills in this area is appropriate.

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