Advice on Internal Communications

- Are there best or emerging practices in how programs communicate internally to complete CPRs?
- Is there a recommended timeline for communications? (Submitting drafts and internal reviews often coincide with busy academic periods)

Some things to consider:

- A central shared drive or data management system (store emails, sign offs, etc. – see handout 5) will ensure everyone can access current (and historical) CPR-related material at any time.
- Provide regular updates on the progress of the CPR. Ensuring updates on the CPR are a regular agenda item for Department meetings can be an easy way to accomplish this goal.
- Try to be proactive about identifying responsibilities and agree on the process to be used at the outset. Agreeing upfront on expectations for communications and how documents will be shared throughout can also help smooth the process (see also handout 5).
- More specifically, to ensure key stakeholders are appropriately kept "in the loop", create a communication plan early in the CPR process. This would help identify early in the review process for how you plan to engage / communicate with these stakeholders (to clarify issues; respond to recommendations; craft the Implementation Plan, provide regular updates on the CPR, etc.).
- Handout 2 suggests that a generic timeline for CPRs might be produced. As this will likely be somewhat unique to each CPR, plans for critical communications could then easily be built into such a timeline by each program / department undergoing a review.

Some miscellaneous related findings from the first cycle of audits:

- Auditors heard during one site visit of a practice that involved updating the relevant Dean or the Provost on progress that had been made with respect to quality assurance initiatives during annual budget meetings. Drawing together progress on academic initiatives with financial planning struck the auditors as a good practice. The reporting model on budgeting already exists and the addition of a report on the Implementation Plan following a Cyclical Program Review or a report on a new program would create a more regularized consideration of academic improvements and assessment.
- The auditors observed the close and continuous interaction of Deans as a group helping to guide the university forward but, also, as colleagues who willingly shared, on a rotating basis, roles as Chairs of numerous committees that play an important role in quality assurance. The commitment of faculty members from across the university, participating students, and staff who support the committees that play a role in the quality assurance process was also evident.