DEAN'S RESPONSE TO PROGRAM REVIEW
B.S. Physics
College of Science

The purpose of the Dean's Response is to highlight the strengths and opportunities within the program, aiding the prioritization of the program's action plan. It allows the dean to offer support to the program, identify common interests across programs within the college and Cal Poly Pomona, and connect relevant resources on- and off-campus. Encapsulating these efforts helps align priorities for continuous improvement, and attempts to meet identified resource needs.

Dates of External Review: April 11 and 12, 2024 (in-person)

External Reviewers: Jennifer Klay (Cal Poly San Luis Obispo); Brian Monacelli (JPL / Pasadena City College)

Date of Internal Review: March 14, 2024

Internal Reviewers: Stephen Osborn (Science); Kimberley Miller (Agriculture)

Meeting date with department chair:

Key Strengths of the Program. *Provide a list of the top (5 or less) program strengths. Further details are only necessary if they are absent from the self-study, external review report, internal review report, or department response.*

As noted by the reviewers, the department has a strong commitment to student success with a supportive community for their majors, exceptional connections to alumni and industry, and a high level of research activity engaging undergraduates. Another strength is the department's integration of activity sections in their core curriculum to support student learning in the challenging upper-division courses. The sense of belonging of students in the department is particularly notable and starts from the beginning with tenure-line faculty teaching the department FYE (first-year experience) course sequence and continues with strong interactions of faculty with students throughout the curriculum and as part of research experiences.

Priorities for Action. *Provide a prioritized list of the top (5 or less) areas of improvement for the program. Further details are only necessary if they are absent from the self-study, external review report, internal review report, or department response.*

The short- and long-term priorities of the action plan were discussed with the dean's office and are supported. The short-term action to support majors by enrolling them in the same section of intro physics will certainly strengthen connections among the cohort and is already being implemented for the fall semester. A longer term goal to increase the percentage of majors who identify as women and/or gender minorities is also a focus across the nation, and the recent establishment of a student club to support these efforts is notable. To support faculty, actions include enhancing faculty peer mentorship, which is critical with recent hiring, and increasing faculty time to conduct research, which is being supported in part by utilizing department indirect cost recovery funds in the summer. Longer term priorities such as increasing tenure-track faculty density and improving the workload among faculty and staff continue to be important and challenging, particularly with the current budget environment.

Additional Comments *(optional)*:

I want to acknowledge the Department's loss of two of their leaders during the past few years. The ability of the faculty and staff to continue supporting their students under such difficult circumstances is truly exceptional.

Dean's Name: Alison Baski

Dean's Signature: Alison Baski

Date: 5/8/2025