

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCEDURES

In accordance with the academic program review policy of California State University, these procedures are provided for the review of academic programs.

The academic program review's primary goal is to enhance the quality of academic programs. To achieve this purpose, these academic program review procedures encourage self-study and planning within programs and strengthen connections among the strategic plans of the program, the college, and the university. In addition, the essential element of the academic program review is the identification and evaluation of student learning goals as a key indicator of program effectiveness. Further, academic program reviews provide information for curricular and budgetary planning decisions at each administrative level.

The academic program review process is based on a cycle of self-inquiry, review, and improvement. The focus of the academic program review is on inquiry, analysis, and evaluation, not merely description. The reflections and conclusions drawn from the academic program review are to be evidentiary, with clear evidence that the faculty have evaluated data derived from their program's goals and student learning objectives as well as data provided by the Office of Institutional Research (see Appendix 1, *Academic Program Review Data*). Programs may secure additional program-specific data by contacting the Office of Institutional Research. The basic components of academic program review include the following:

- a self-study, recommendations, and preliminary implementation plan completed by the faculty associated with the program;
- review and recommendations by the college governance committees;
- review and recommendations by the university governance committees, when appropriate;
- revision of the preliminary implementation plan in response to recommendations by the department, college, and university governance committees and the administration;
- final approval by the college dean and provost of all elements of the program review documents; and
- implementation of actions to improve program effectiveness.

The college review committee, college dean, and university committee (as appropriate) recommend to the provost one of the following actions as a result of the academic program review:

1. Program approved for continuance with expectation for successful implementation of the seven-year plan.
2. Program approved for continuance with specified modifications and under conditions noted, including progress reports and possible review in less than seven years.
3. Program recommended for discontinuance. The university's policy for program discontinuance is initiated.

The provost, with delegated authority from the president, makes the final determination for program continuance through issuance of a letter at the completion of the review process.

The academic program review procedures are updated as necessary for currency and consistency with university changes in structure, institutional data, and academic programs.

I. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Faculty Governance

Governance responsibility for the development, implementation, and periodic review of the effectiveness of university-level academic program review procedures is vested with the University Educational Policies Committee in consultation with other governance committees participating in or affected by academic program review procedures. Academic program review procedures are dynamic, subject to continual examination and refinement as necessary for currency with university changes (e.g., structure, institutional research/assessment processes, and new and revised academic programs). Changes to the academic program review procedures may be recommended by and to the University Educational Policies Committee for consideration, consultation with the Graduate Council and Provost's Council of Deans, and recommendation to the Academic Senate.

Administration

The vice provost, on behalf of the provost, manages the academic program review process and works closely with the college deans to ensure that (a) a meaningful and thorough review is conducted for each degree program, interdisciplinary program, honors program, and general education; (b) self-study reports, recommendations, and implementation plans are completed in a timely manner; (c) outcomes of the review are communicated to the campus community and the CSU; and (d) outcomes of the review are linked to decision making processes for academic program development, strategic planning, and budgetary processes.

Program Faculty

Each academic program has an identified department chair (or equivalent), program faculty, and dean (or appropriate administrator) who are responsible for overseeing the academic program. The program faculty is normally the department faculty. All faculty participate in the preparation and review of the program's academic program review. Interdisciplinary programs are governed by an interdisciplinary set of faculty whose rights and responsibilities are identified by an established interdisciplinary program charter. (See Appendix 2, *Interdisciplinary Programs and Honors Program Charter*, and Appendix 3, *General Education Program Charter and Academic Program Review*)

Program faculty are responsible for developing expected student learning objectives for each program and for employing methods annually to evaluate program effectiveness in achieving programmatic student learning objectives. The assessment of these objectives forms the core of the academic program review. (Responsibility for assessment of student learning at the classroom level resides with the individual faculty member and is not an element of academic program review.) Overall administrative leadership in support of developing programmatic learning outcomes lies with the college deans with support from the vice provost. Faculty leadership is provided by the Director of the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the Faculty Coordinator for the Assessment of Student Learning, the Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittee of the University Educational Policies Committee (UEPC), and department chairs.

College and University Committees

Colleges evaluate academic program reviews using their established processes and criteria consistent with university policy and procedures and accreditation standards and submit such documents to the Vice Provost. Colleges ensure review committee members receive orientation and training for conducting program reviews. Colleges may establish additional requirements for the effectiveness of the academic program review process. Similarly, university committees

(University Educational Policies Committee and the Graduate Council) employ processes and criteria to evaluate academic program reviews, consistent with requirements identified in the *Constitution of the General Faculty*.

External Program Reviewers

While the internal review processes are essential for program quality, an external program review perspective may also play an important role in the evaluation process. Use of external reviewer(s) is strongly encouraged and may be requested during the self study phase or following the completion of the academic program review. Appendix 4, *External Reviewer for Academic Program Review and Description of Process for Hiring and Conduct of Work*, describes procedures for conducting an external review.

II. PROGRAMS TO BE REVIEWED

The academic program review document is to be developed by the program faculty and accompanied by signatures of the program faculty and dean(s) (See Appendix 5, *Signature Page*).

List of Academic Programs

The following programs are subject to academic program reviews: baccalaureate, master's, and post-baccalaureate credential programs; interdisciplinary programs (majors and stand-alone minors); honors program; and general education (see Appendix 6, *Listing of Programs for Academic Program Review*). Doctoral programs follow a separate template, *Academic Program Review Procedures for Doctoral Programs*. The Graduate Council is responsible for the development of academic program review procedures for doctoral programs. Implementation pending approval of Academic Senate and President.

Accredited Programs

For programs subject to professional, disciplinary, or specialized accreditation, academic program review is coordinated with the accreditation or re-accreditation review cycle. The self-study developed for professional or specialized accreditation reviews normally provides the essential requirements of academic program review and may, therefore, be used wholly or partially as the academic program review self study document, with approval by the college dean. The remaining steps in the academic program process are followed for accredited programs, including college and university committee review, implementation plan, and the meeting with the provost. Appendix 7, *Substitution of Accreditation Self Study for the Academic Program Review Self Study* describes the process for substitution of the accreditation self study for the academic program review self study.

III. PROCESS OVERVIEW AND CHRONOLOGY

As required by the CSU Board of Trustees, academic program reviews must be conducted periodically in accordance with the established schedule. The process follows the chronology and timeline found in Appendix 8, *Academic Program Review Chronology*, to ensure meaningful review, timely review, feedback, and submission of academic program review reports to the provost and CSU Board of Trustees. At CSU Stanislaus, programs are reviewed on a seven-year cycle. This schedule may be accelerated in individual cases either at the discretion of the provost, college dean, departmental chair, or in compliance with recommendations from prior academic program reviews. Programs accredited by a disciplinary accrediting agency are reviewed in accordance with the review cycle established by the agency, not to exceed seven years. It is the responsibility of each individual and committee to conduct the Academic Program Review in accordance with the prescribed timeline.

Requests for delaying a review are rarely granted. If necessary for compelling reasons, requests for a delay are initiated by the department chair/program administrator to the college dean, who determines whether or not to advance the recommendation to the vice provost. The decision to delay a review rests with the vice provost and normally is granted only in rare circumstances to coordinate with a professional accreditation review process or to allow a new program sufficient time to conduct a review. Delays are granted normally for one year only.

IV. SELF-STUDY CRITERIA

The academic program review process provides a comprehensive, candid, and reflective self-study that focuses on future planning to enhance student learning and program quality.

Undergraduate and Graduate Self-Study Documents

Departments with undergraduate and graduate programs provide either a separate or integrated review for each degree level, including comprehensive assessment of student learning and program functioning at both levels. If an integrated review document is submitted, each review criterion is addressed and responses clearly differentiated for the baccalaureate and master's degree.

Interdisciplinary Programs

Interdisciplinary programs are reviewed using the same criteria as academic majors, with appropriate modification. Responsibility for academic program quality and the review of academic programs rests with the interdisciplinary studies faculty. The academic program review self study document is to be developed by the faculty of the interdisciplinary program and accompanied by signatures of the program faculty and dean(s).

The following criteria are addressed in the self-study document:

Changes Since the Last Academic Program Review

Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken in response to each of the recommendations made in the previous academic program review. Briefly describe important program and field changes over the past seven years and how the curriculum was revised for currency in response to these changes.

Enrollment Trends

Based on institutional research data, summarize the program's enrollment trends, student characteristics, retention and graduation rates, degrees conferred, time to degree, course enrollments, and student/faculty ratio. Provide an evaluation of the program's success in recruiting, retaining, and graduating students—overall and disaggregated by demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and transfer/native). Describe key actions taken or planned to ensure student success.

Commitment to Student Learning

List the learning objectives for students majoring in the program. Referring to the Annual Program Assessment Updates describe how achievement of each of these learning objectives is evaluated and documented through both indirect and direct methods. (Append annual assessment reports and curriculum map that aligns core courses with program goals, student learning objectives, assessment methods, instructional emphasis, and primary assessment methods.)

Based on the institutional research data and the data collected through Annual Program Assessment, describe successful outcomes and any changes the program faculty have made and/or plan to make for improving student learning, curriculum, instructional delivery, and other elements of program effectiveness.

For master's programs, also describe how the information derived from the assessment of the six student learning goals for graduate students has been used to improve the graduate program:

Students will demonstrate –

1. advanced knowledge, skills, and values appropriate to their discipline.
2. the ability to be creative, analytical, and critical thinkers.
3. the ability to work as individual researchers/scholars as well as in collaboration with others in contributing to the scholarship of their disciplines, as appropriate.
4. relevant knowledge of the global perspectives appropriate to their discipline.
5. knowledge of new and various methods and technologies as appropriate to their discipline.
6. advanced oral and written communication skills, complemented as appropriate to the discipline, by the ability to access and analyze information from a myriad of primary, print, and technological sources.

Curriculum and Instruction

Delivery of Instructional Program

Evaluate the program's effectiveness in offering the instructional program in Turlock, Stockton, and/or other off-campus sites, and via distance education. Describe issues and actions taken or planned, as appropriate related to program delivery, such as the scheduling of courses in order to meet student program needs and for program completion, library resources, and technological support.

Advising/Mentoring

Evaluate the effectiveness of student advising and mentoring and involvement with student majors.

Graduate Academic Culture

For graduate programs, evaluate the effectiveness of the methods used by the graduate program to sustain a graduate-level academic culture. Include an evaluation of the extent of active student involvement with the scholarly literature of the field and ongoing student scholarly engagement. As appropriate, identify strategies for improving graduate culture that the department, college, or university may employ.

General Education

Evaluate the program's effectiveness in providing service courses to the General Education program. Provide a review of all general education courses offered by the program, including a paragraph for each area of general education describing how these courses align with general education goals and the results (not the data) of any assessment activities undertaken to make this determination. Attach up-to-date sample syllabi for each general education course offered by the program.

Describe how the General Education program aligns with/complements the program's student learning objectives, by describing in a paragraph or two how the 51-unit program complements or supports the major program of study, including (by reference if appropriate) any assessment

activities or discussions used to make this determination. Identify any areas for further development or other recommendations for the GE program.

Written Communication

Describe the effectiveness of the program in improving students' writing skills through the curriculum and/or writing proficiency courses.

Service Courses

Evaluate the program's effectiveness in providing service courses to other majors.

Teaching

Describe the teaching philosophies and instructional methods used within the program and evaluate how well these support achievement of program learning outcomes and promote student learning. Evaluate how well the program encourages, evaluates, and rewards high-quality teaching.

Curricular Plans and Alignment

Describe future curricular plans and their alignment with the college and university's mission and strategic plan.

Units Beyond 120, etc.

Units Beyond 120 for Undergraduate Programs. Title 5 (section 40508) requires that "each campus shall establish and maintain a monitoring system to ensure that justification is provided for all program requirements that extend the baccalaureate unit requirement beyond 120 units." Display the program units using the template provided in Appendix 9, *Baccalaureate Degree Audit Information* and provide a justification if the units exceed 120.

Units for Graduate and Post-baccalaureate Credential Programs. For graduate programs that exceed 30 units for a Master of Arts degree or 36 units for a Master of Science degree, provide a justification for the total program units. For post-baccalaureate credential programs that exceed units required by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, provide a justification for the additional units.

Faculty

Evaluate collective faculty expertise for covering the breadth of the program's curriculum. Summarize and evaluate institutional research data regarding faculty and their deployment – sufficiency of full and part-time faculty, released time and reimbursed time from grants/contracts, anticipated retirements, and other faculty issues important for program effectiveness.

Evaluate effectiveness of collective faculty engagement on balance across scholarship, research, and/or creative activity and level of support for these scholarly activities. Evaluate program support for and involvement in faculty development, especially new non-tenured, and part-time faculty.

Implementation Plan

Preliminary Implementation Plan

As a result of the self study, the department chair develops a *preliminary* implementation plan that reflects the view of the program faculty. This preliminary implementation plan is discussed by the department chair with the Provost, Dean, and Vice Provost during the academic program review meeting. Participants in this meeting may also include the program coordinator and/or faculty as determined by the department chair and dean.

The implementation plan guides the activities of the program for the subsequent seven years. The implementation plan includes (but is not limited to) the following elements:

1. Key recommendations of the program faculty resulting from the self-study.
2. Anticipated student profile in terms of number and type of students over the next seven years.
3. Action steps to be taken in order to achieve each of the recommendations and student enrollments over the next seven years.
4. Types of human, fiscal, and physical resources needed to implement enrollment projections and recommendations.

Final Implementation Plan

The *final* implementation plan results from discussion and consultation among the program representative(s), the department chair, college and university committees, the college dean, the Vice Provost, and the Provost.

The *final* implementation plan is submitted electronically to the Vice Provost no later than three weeks after the meeting with the Provost.

Improving the Academic Program Review Procedures

As part of the Provost's Academic Program Review meeting and/or with the final implementation plan, the department chair provides an evaluation of the effectiveness of the academic program review procedures and recommendations for improving the process. Elements to consider include the review criteria, internal and/or external review components, assessment of student learning, institutional research data, timeline, college and university review processes, student participation, and faculty participation.

Approved by the Academic Senate May 11, 2004

Approved by President Hughes July 1, 2004

11/AS/09/UEPC--Amendment to 5/AS/04/UEPC--Amended and approved by the Academic Senate May 12, 2009