

California State University | Stanislaus

Academic Program Review

PROCEDURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCEDURES	3
A.	CONNECTIONS	3
II.	ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PURPOSE	4
III.	ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS	4
A.	RESPONSIBILITIES	5
IV.	ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW COMPONENTS	8
V.	ASSESSMENT DESIGN	9
A.	LEARNING OUTCOMES	9
B.	CURRICULAR ALIGNMENT	11
C.	INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.....	12
D.	SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENTS	13
E.	SCORING RUBRICS	14
VI.	EXTERNAL CONSULTANT REVIEW	16
A.	EXTERNAL CONSULTANT REVIEW PURPOSE	16
B.	EXTERNAL CONSULTANT’S PROFILE AND SUPPORT	16
C.	EXTERNAL CONSULTANT’S TASKS	17
VII.	ASSESSMENT PROCESS	19
VIII.	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	20
IX.	ANNUAL REPORTS	21

I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCEDURES

The Academic Program Review (APR) Procedures are designed to provide CSU Stanislaus faculty, administrators, and other reviewers information to guide and support the APR process. The Procedures provide background on the purpose and guiding principles of the APR cycle and resources for completing the self study. APR components have been aligned to the WASC Criteria for Review (CFRs) which are referenced throughout the procedures.

The assessment strategies outlined in the Academic Program Review Procedures adhere to the university's [Principles for the Assessment of Student Learning](#) (2004) which defines the role of assessment within the institution.

A. CONNECTIONS

The APR focuses on academic quality, program integrity, and student learning. The APR cycle is a well-planned, systematic, continuous improvement process connected to the CSU Stanislaus' Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Themes, and Strategic Actions (Figure 1). The three themes of the CSU Stanislaus Strategic Plan provide guidance for academic programs and support units to improve and assess progress towards achieving our mission.

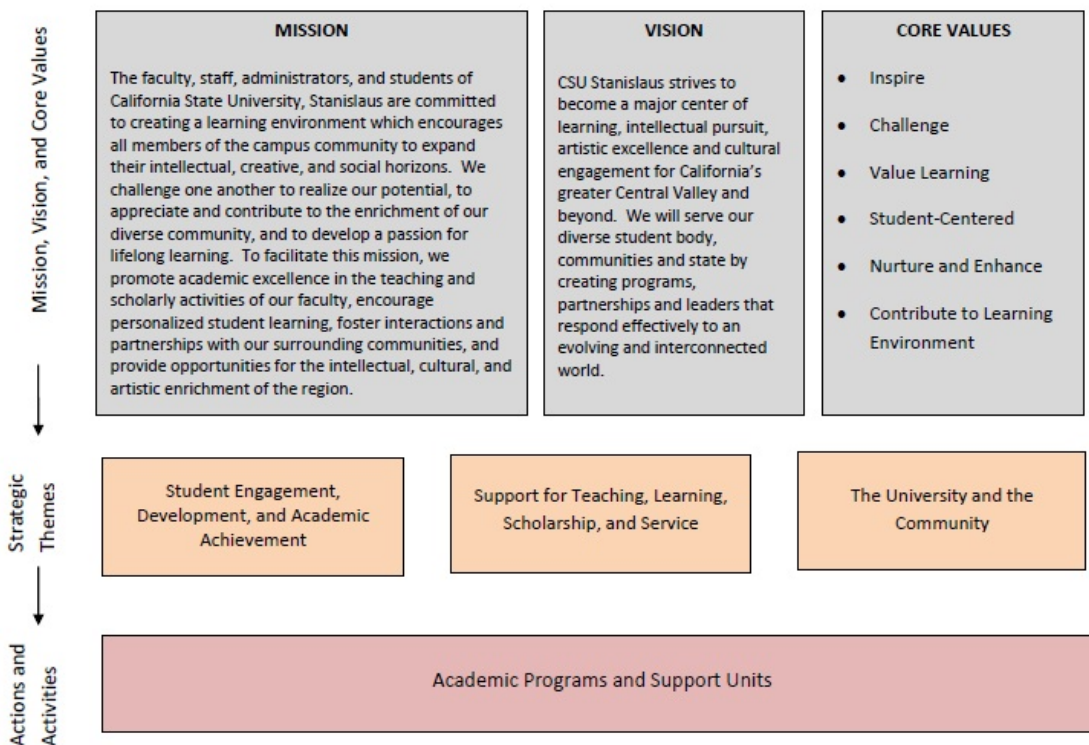


Figure 1: Achieving the CSU Stanislaus Mission

II. ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PURPOSE

The purpose of the Academic Program Review (APR) at CSU Stanislaus is to enhance the quality of academic programs through a focused, in-depth self study completed by faculty.

The APR is intended to be meaningful, manageable, flexible, and collaborative. APRs provide information for curricular and budgetary planning decisions at each administrative level (CFRs 4.1- 4.4).

Governance responsibility for the development, implementation, and periodic review of the effectiveness of APR procedures is vested with the University Educational Policies Committee (UEPC) in consultation with other governance committees participating in or affected by the procedures. The APR procedures are dynamic, subject to continual examination and refinement as necessary. Changes to the procedures may be recommended by and to the UEPC for consideration, consultation with the Graduate Council and Provost's Advisory Council, and recommendation to the Academic Senate (CFRs 4.6, 4.7).

III. ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

The Academic Program Review (APR) is a continuous, collaborative process. An essential element of the APR is the identification and evaluation of learning outcomes. Faculty reflections and conclusions drawn from data derived from program and course learning outcomes are augmented with data provided by the Office of Institutional Research, the Library, and the Office of Information Technology. The process of reflecting upon and using data to inform discussions and actions contributes to decision making and continuous program improvement. The review process strengthens connections between the program, the college, and the University. Varying roles and responsibilities are shared among program faculty, administrators, internal reviewers (college and university committees), and external consultants.

The APR generally occurs once every seven years and includes

- faculty involvement with the CSU Stanislaus community of administrators, students, alumni, and employers;
- the Mission, Strategic Plan, and program learning outcomes to guide the APR;
- assessment of educational effectiveness using learning outcomes that describe what the student will be able to know and do, under what conditions, with identified measurable results or products attained;
- multiple assessment methods; quantitative and qualitative data document that students are learning what faculty are teaching;
- review and analyses of data to assess progress toward achievement of learning and to inform decision making;
- informed recommendations and actions based on analyses; and
- development of an implementation plan that provides the structure for creating annual reporting/planning to continue the cycle of self-inquiry, review, and improvement for the next six years. The Plan provides the structure for updates as necessary for currency and consistency with University changes in structure, institutional data, and academic programs.

A. RESPONSIBILITIES

The APR process is defined through the responsibilities of program, faculty, college and university committees, and administrators.

1. PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Accredited Programs

Programs involved in professional, or specialized accreditation, will have the APR coordinated with the accreditation or re-accreditation review cycle. The professional or specialized accreditation self study typically includes the APR requirements. The *Substitution of Accreditation Self Study for the Academic Program Review Self Study* (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) provides an overview of the required APR components. Any elements not covered in the accreditation self study will need to be completed for the APR (CFRs 2.1, 2.2.).

b. General Education Program

The General Education APR includes the traditional program (both upper and lower division requirements/courses), the First-Year Experience Program, and the Summit Program.

The APR self study for the General Education program is completed by the Faculty Director for General Education in collaboration with the General Education Subcommittee of the University Educational Policies Committee and under the direction of the AVP (Academic Affairs). The General Education APR adheres to the following path for development and review:

1. Faculty Director for General Education
2. General Education Subcommittee
3. University Educational Policies Committee
4. Academic Senate (via Senate Executive Committee)
5. Academic Affairs

Specific recommendations resulting from the APR that establish or revise policy follow normal campus procedures for policy approval via the Academic Senate and president.

c. Graduate Education

Graduate Council reviews all graduate-level APRs. Information is collected from the programs on student achievement on the six graduate learning goals (see Appendix 3). The purposes of the [graduate student learning goals assessment](#) are directly informed by the University's Mission, Core Values, Strategic Plan, and by the needs of graduate programs and faculty.

d. *Interdisciplinary and Honors Programs*

The Interdisciplinary and Honors Programs complete a self study responding to criteria, modified as appropriate to their program.

Interdisciplinary minors will complete a modified APR depending on availability of data.

2. FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES

Program faculty participate in the preparation and review of the APR. Also, each academic program has an identified department chair (or equivalent), program faculty, and dean (or appropriate administrator) responsible for overseeing the academic program. Assessment support is provided by the offices of Assessment, Institutional Research, and the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. These offices provide assessment resources and workshops as well as offering individual consultations to refine outcomes, develop assessment methods, review programmatic data, and report and store findings. In addition to these offices, faculty leadership and support is provided by the Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittee of the University Educational Policies Committee and department chairs (CFRs 1.2, 4.6, 4.7).

Program faculty are responsible for developing and annually assessing student learning outcomes as a means of evaluating program effectiveness. The annual assessment of these outcomes contributes to the seven-year APR cycle.

3. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES: INTERNAL REVIEWS

College and university committees provide an internal review component for the APR process. Colleges evaluate APRs using their established processes and criteria consistent with university policy and procedures and accreditation standards. Completed APRs are submitted to the AVP (Academic Affairs). Colleges ensure review committee members receive orientation and training for conducting APRs. Colleges may establish additional requirements for the effectiveness of the APR process. Similarly, the University Educational Policies Committee and the Graduate Council apply criteria to evaluate APRs, consistent with requirements identified in the *Constitution of the General Faculty* (CFRs 4.6, 4.7).

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 APR:

- Program approved for continuance with expectation for successful implementation of the seven-year plan.
- Program approved for continuance with specified modifications and under conditions noted, including progress reports and possible review in less than seven years.
- Program recommended for suspension or discontinuance as indicated in the University's *Policy for the Suspension and Discontinuance of Academic Programs*.

4. ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The AVP (Academic Affairs), on behalf of the provost, facilitates the APR process (see Appendix 4) 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 program; 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 (CFRs 4.6, 4.7).

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.

IV. ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW COMPONENTS

The Academic Program Review (APR) self study and appendices (see Appendices 1-10) are authored by program faculty with contributing support, review, and recommendations from college governance committees, university governance committees (when appropriate), college dean, director of Institutional Research, the AVP (Academic Affairs) and the expert opinion of an external consultant (CFR 4.6). Generally, the department chair is responsible for coordinating the program review process with faculty.

The APR self study is organized into five sections followed by appendices with supporting documents:

1. **Program Overview:** introduction and historical context, Mission and Strategic Plan, program description, administrative reporting structure, review of changes since the last APR;
2. **Data Review:** student profile, faculty profile, enrollment trends, delivery of instructional program, program comparisons;
3. **Commitment to Student Learning:** advising and mentoring, teaching, RSCA, assessment of student learning (Section F: Assessment Design);
4. **Resources:** physical facilities and equipment, fiscal resources, technology resources and support, library holdings; and
5. **Implementation Plan:** seven-year plan for Program Learning Outcomes and Program Maintenance Outcomes.

In summary, the APR self study

- documents academic quality and the extent to which students are achieving learning outcomes;
- demonstrates educational effectiveness by assessing student learning outcomes;
- acknowledges program strengths; and
- seeks ways of improving and enhancing the quality of a program (Implementation Plan).

V. ASSESSMENT DESIGN

Assessment *of* learning occurs by aligning one course learning outcome with a strategy, assignment, and assessment. Shifting from assessment *of* learning to assessment *for* learning can occur when faculty use aggregated data to improve the educational effectiveness of programs. Data collected and aggregated from the course level will inform action at the department/program level.

A. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The design of curriculum including instruction, educational experiences, and assessment, describes what students should be able to know and do in relation to what they have learned. Collectively, Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) are represented in Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). PLOs are also informed by the University Mission, Strategic Plan, the College and Department Mission Statements, General Education Learning Goals and Outcomes, and Graduate Student Learning Goals, as illustrated in Figure 2.

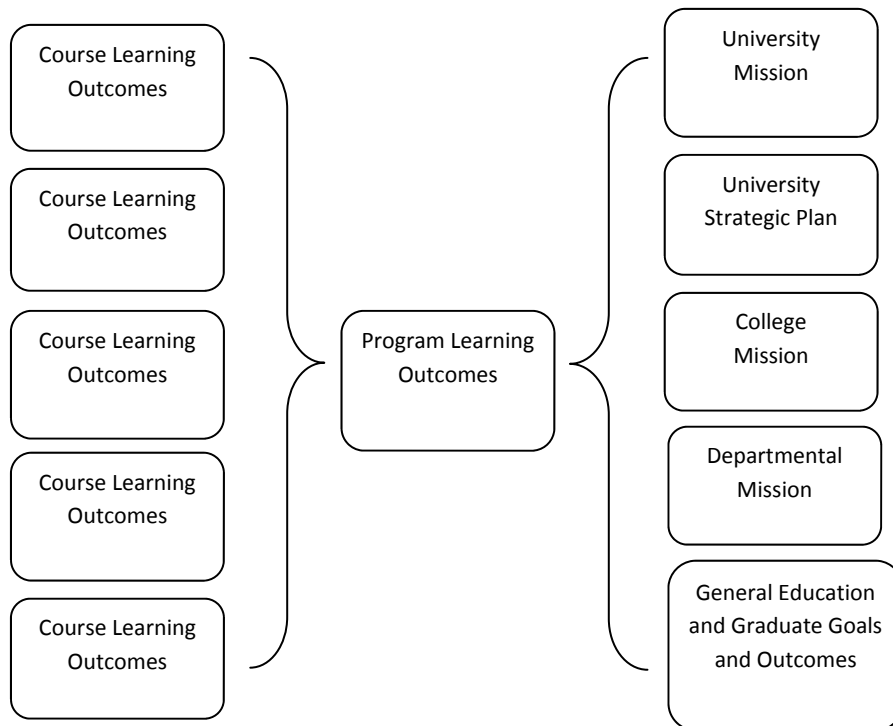


Figure 2. Relationships to Program Learning Outcomes

1. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Each program defines itself and its uniqueness through Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).

Defining the types of learning students will collectively be able to demonstrate or produce from courses in the program are the PLOs (see [Developing Learning Outcomes](#)).

2. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) are statements that specify what students will know or be able to do as a result of their experience in the course. The statements begin with a stem such as “Students will be able to <<insert verb and describe what they will know or be able to do>>. CLOs are expressed as knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or dispositions.

Well written CLOs have the characteristics of describing student’s actions that must be

- *observable*,
- *measurable* (consistently by different observers/scorers), and
- *demonstrated*.

Bloom’s Taxonomy provides levels and verbs used for stating specific behavioral learning outcomes. It is important to avoid verbs that are *unclear* and subject to different interpretations, such as: know, become aware of, be familiar with, appreciate, learn, and understand (see [Bloom’s Taxonomy](#)).

A comparison of unclear and clear learning outcomes follows.

Unclear Learning Outcomes	Clear Learning Outcomes Observable, Measurable
Students understand the nine reasons for conducting a needs assessment.	Replace <i>understand</i> . Students will be able to list / describe / illustrate nine reasons for conducting a needs assessment.
Students develop an appreciation of cultural diversity in the workplace.	Replace <i>develop an appreciation</i> . Students will describe how different cultures in their workplace contribute to a learning community.

B. CURRICULAR ALIGNMENT

Selecting a variety of assessment methods assists faculty to measure the impact of programs on students by assessing student learning outcomes over time. A Curriculum Map organizes the process (see Appendix 5). A Curriculum Map, as displayed in Table 1, illustrates connections between PLOs and CLOs (as found in Course Syllabi). Table 1 also identifies to what *level* learning outcomes are taught in courses, and as a result, serves to identify any redundancies and/or gaps in outcome coverage.

Table 1.
Curriculum Map

Program Learning Outcomes	Core Courses						
	E.g., Course A	Course B	Course C	Course D	Course E	Course F	Continue...
Written Communication Skills	I				E		
Oral Communication Skills			I				
Information Literacy				E			
Critical Thinking	I			E		R	
Quantitative Literacy		E					

KEY:

Outcomes assessment data not collected for program-level analysis	Outcome assessment data collected for program-level analysis
---	--

NOTE: In the curriculum map, the level at which the outcome is addressed is identified. In this case, the following scale is used: Introduced (I), Emphasized (E), and Reinforced (R). Other options include:

- Introduced (I), Developed (D), and Mastered (M)
- Introduced (I), Practiced (P), Demonstrated (D)
- Introduced (I), Reinforced (R), and Mastered (M)
- Basic (B), Intermediate (I), Advanced (A)

C. INDICATORS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Planning begins with the alignment and relationships between PLOs, CLOs, assessments, assignments, experiences, and activities.

Table 2

Alignment of Outcomes, Assessments, and Assignments

Program Learning Outcome	Course Learning Outcome (in syllabus)	Assessment: How do you know learning happened?	Assignments / Experiences / Activities
PLO1 Students will be able to construct and deliver a clear and effective oral presentation.	Students will be able to communicate publically in a clear, engaging and confident manner (PLO1).	Student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks clearly • Speaks with enthusiasm • Speaks in a confident manner 	Create a PowerPoint presentation that summarizes in 10 slides or less the study completed. Present the PowerPoint using the criteria in the rubric.

Multiple assessment measures are used to assess student learning in academic programs and to provide data sources for curriculum changes and instruction modifications. Assessment tools, such as scoring rubrics, can be used to score student work and also to aggregate data, providing evidence for ways in which students are learning.

Faculty select measures most appropriate for their PLOs and collect and assess direct evidence of student achievement. The multiple sources of evidence used at various points might include but are not limited to the examples in Table 3.

Table 3

Multiple Assessment Measures

Indirect Evidence Student perceptions of their learning	Direct Evidence Assessment of behaviors or products of student learning
Self-assessments Self-reflection / journal writing Program exit surveys Exit interviews Alumni surveys Employer surveys Focus groups National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	Student work samples from assignments Student performances Oral presentations Instructor developed tests Midterm and final exams Standardized tests Course grades (using rubric/established criteria) Research papers Interviews Portfolios Capstone projects Field experiences Simulations Group projects Case analysis

When designing program assessment, it is helpful to create an inventory of the assessment measures found in the core courses in the program. Table 4 provides a variety of assessment measures that might be used in the assessment process.

Table 4
Assessment Measures identified in Core Courses in a Program

PROGRAM TITLE																			
Core Courses in Program	Assessment Measures																		
	Direct									Indirect									
	Midterm Exam	Final Exam	Writing Assignments	Research Paper	Oral Presentations	Graded Homework	Graded Participation	Standardized Tests	Case Analysis	Capstone Project / Thesis	Field Experience	Simulations	Group / Team Projects	Portfolios	Self-reflection / Journals	Alumni Survey	Course Evaluation Survey	Program Exit Survey	Employer Survey
Course					✓							✓							
Course			✓					✓											

D. SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENTS

Ultimately, each course should have one assignment that has been identified by faculty as a required “signature assignment” of the course. The signature assignment should ideally be taught and assessed using a faculty developed rubric or established criteria each time the course is taught. The rubric assists faculty to collect program-level data from course-level assignments. Data are collected, reviewed, analyzed and used by faculty to collectively determine the educational effectiveness of the program. Table 5 illustrates the program outcome assessed by course and signature assignment.

When identifying signature assignments, describe the

- process used to measure student achievement and student learning,
- expectations for student attainment that could be used to create a signature assignment rubric, and
- data collected for signature assignments.

Table 5
Signature Assignment Assessment Data

PROGRAM TITLE						
Program Learning Outcomes	Course Learning Outcomes	Signature Assignment	Assessment Data by Semester / Term (Grades, Rubric Scores)			
			Date	Date	Date	Date

E. SCORING RUBRICS

1. THREE DIMENSIONS

A scoring rubric is an assessment tool with three dimensions. The **first** dimension involves a identifying a rating scale that describes levels of achievement. The rating scale may be numerical (using numbers to define a scale), qualitative (using words to describe levels), or both. The **second** dimension lists criteria for the assignment to be scored. The **third** dimension provides the description for each criteria and level within the rating scale. The criteria descriptions provide the standards defined for each performance level.

It is the combination of these dimensions that assists a scorer to define the level of a student’s performance.

2. MEANING IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Rubrics become meaningful when developed by faculty as they assist in clarifying the purpose of an assignment and the levels of expected outcomes. Value is added to the use of rubrics when they are shared with students as the assignment is given. Students then have the opportunity to review their own work in relation to expectations. Samples of student work that illustrate each level of the rating scale are helpful to the learning process.

3. TWO RUBRIC FORMATS

Rubrics provide the three dimensions in two formats: **Holistic** and **Analytic**.

The **Holistic Rubric** combines criteria for each scale level.

Holistic Oral Presentation Rubric	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time. Consistently uses facial expressions and body language. Consistently generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others. Stands up straight, looks relaxed and confident. Establishes eye contact with everyone in the room during the presentation.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks clearly and distinctly most of the time. Frequently uses facial expressions and body language. Frequently generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others. Stands up straight most of the time. Establishes eye contact with most everyone in the room during the presentation.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks clearly and distinctly some of the time. Sometimes uses facial expressions and body language. Sometimes generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others. Sometimes stands up straight some of the time. Sometimes establishes eye contact during the presentation.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely speaks clearly and distinctly. Seldom uses facial expressions and body language. Seldom generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others. Rarely stands up straight. Rarely establishes eye contact during the presentation.

The **Analytic Rubric** displays the description for each criteria and scale level matrix format.

Analytic Oral Presentation Rubric				
Criteria	1	2	3	4
Speaks Clearly	Rarely speaks clearly and distinctly.	Speaks clearly and distinctly some of the time.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most of the time.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time.
Speaks with Enthusiasm (Engaging)	Seldom uses facial expressions and body language. Seldom generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.	Sometimes uses facial expressions and body language. Sometimes generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.	Frequently uses facial expressions and body language. Frequently generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.	Consistently uses facial expressions and body language. Consistently generates a strong interest and enthusiasm about the topic in others.
Speaks in a Confident Manner	Rarely stands up straight. Rarely establishes eye contact during the presentation.	Stands up straight some of the time. Sometimes establishes eye contact during the presentation.	Stands up straight most of the time. Establishes eye contact with most everyone in the room during the presentation.	Stands up straight, looks relaxed and confident. Establishes eye contact with everyone in the room during the presentation.

VI. EXTERNAL CONSULTANT REVIEW

Internal review processes provide a valuable perspective that is essential for program quality. In addition, an external consultant's perspective may play an important role in the evaluation process (CFR 4.4).

A. EXTERNAL CONSULTANT REVIEW PURPOSE

The purpose of engaging an external consultant in the Academic Program Review (APR) process is to assist faculty in improving program quality by providing a new comparative and broader perspective on the program and student learning. External consultants will be individuals of significant professional reputation in the field.

External consultants provide insight on programs from the external perspective of outsiders who have expertise in program content. Their critique, when combined with our own review, lends credibility to the quality and effectiveness of the programs, services, resources, and operations. Consultants study components of a program through a series of specific review objectives or answer questions as prepared by program faculty.

B. EXTERNAL CONSULTANT'S PROFILE AND SUPPORT

As faculty prepare the APR self study, questions arise regarding program features, curriculum, assessment, marketing, and future initiatives. The initial criteria for determining an external consultant includes their ability to answer faculty questions.

The qualifications for an external consultant include the

- highest degree in the relevant discipline;
- rank of associate professor or professor;
- experience in conducting academic program reviews;
- distinguished record in related teaching, research and scholarly activity, and service;
- rank in the same or similar programs on his/her respective campuses;
- no conflict of interest – should not be affiliated with the program under review nor should they have past connections such as graduates or former faculty; and
- ability to complete a site visit and submission of report within the prescribed timeline.

Nominations for external consultant(s) are solicited by the department chair to other institutions, higher education associations, and professional organizations. Consultants may be from a CSU campus or a non-CSU institution, preferably within California. The nominees are reviewed by the departmental faculty, who may reject any of the nominees for cause. The external consultant is selected from the remaining nominees by the college dean. The dean then issues a formal invitation (see Appendix 6).

The college dean and department chair coordinate travel arrangements and the visit schedule, in accordance with University travel policy. A consultant contract is issued to the external consultant (normally \$250 per day), plus transportation and one-night lodging, as required. The payment and refunds are processed upon receipt of the written report from the external consultant and documented accommodation and travel costs, as previously approved. Funds are provided by the Office of

Assessment and reimbursed to the department upon receipt of a copy of the external consultant's report (see Appendix 6).

C. EXTERNAL CONSULTANT'S TASKS

External consultants receive an electronic copy of the draft APR self study and other relevant documents in advance. Additional materials (e.g., course syllabi) should be available in the department office for review during the site visit. It is essential that examples of student work are available for review as consistent with accreditation standards for direct assessment of student work and are completed in accordance with the University's [*Principles for the Assessment of Student Learning*](#). Consultants are asked to

- review the draft self-study document;
- focus on assessment findings, the quality of student learning, and the ability of the program to foster student learning. Review sample student work from introductory to culminating courses, as appropriate, and with student and faculty identification removed from documents;
- conduct selected interview with department chair, program faculty, staff, students, alumni, faculty members outside the department but associated with the program, the college dean, community groups, advisory groups, or other community members as appropriate to the program;
- conduct an exit meeting with department chair, program/departmental faculty, and college dean; and
- prepare a report responding to faculty questions and report writing prompts, including making recommendations for quality enhancement.

Questions will vary depending on the type and size of the program; consultants may be asked to respond to questions such as:

- Do references in syllabi adequately cover current knowledge in the field?
- Do CVs of faculty demonstrate appropriate qualifications for teaching in this program?
- Does the curriculum demonstrate an undergraduate / graduate level of instruction?
- Do assessments align with student learning outcomes?

The external consultant visits the campus for one or two days to meet with and interview faculty, students, alumni, staff, community members, and administrators. Consultants focus their visit in three areas: 1) curriculum, 2) assessment of student learning outcomes, and 3) the student experience. A dinner is recommended the evening previous to the site visit for faculty to meet with the consultant and the dean as a way to begin the visit. A schedule for a site visit should be developed jointly by faculty and their dean (see Appendix 6).

The consultant is asked to provide a report that includes general comments, singles out features of the program that merit commendations, and makes recommendations for improvement (see Appendix 5). The consultant's report varies in length between three and five pages. A preliminary report is generally completed on site prior to departure. The final report is to be completed within two weeks of the campus visit.

The consultant writes a summary of findings of strengths and areas for improvement for each of the criteria identified in the APR and other issues specific to the program as identified by the department chair and college dean (see Appendix 6) The report is organized in three parts:

- Part I: *Executive Summary.* General observations and comments are provided on the program and curriculum, quality of student learning and the achievement of student learning outcomes, the implementation plan, faculty, students, facilities, and resources. Consultants respond to questions posed by faculty.
- Part II: *Commendations.* Consultants provide comments about what the program is doing well.
- Part III: *Recommendations.* Comments provide future direction for the faculty to use to improve student learning. Evaluative feedback is offered as well as suggestions to improve any aspect of the program. This review is to be forward-looking and yet realistic in terms of actions that can be accomplished by the department within existing resources, as well as actions that may require additional investment in the program. Recommendations may require no new resources as well as those that do. The report may note recommendations that have been shown to be effective elsewhere.

Note: The External Consultant's Report is submitted to the department chair and college dean and is included as part of program's APR self study. Findings from the Report may be incorporated into the program's Implementation Plan as part of the APR self study.

VII. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

At CSU Stanislaus, assessment is “defined as a continuous process used by the University for a) evaluating the degree to which all University programs and services contribute to the fulfillment of the University’s primary mission, and b) documenting and improving the University’s effectiveness.” (Assessment Plan, CSU Stanislaus, 1997)

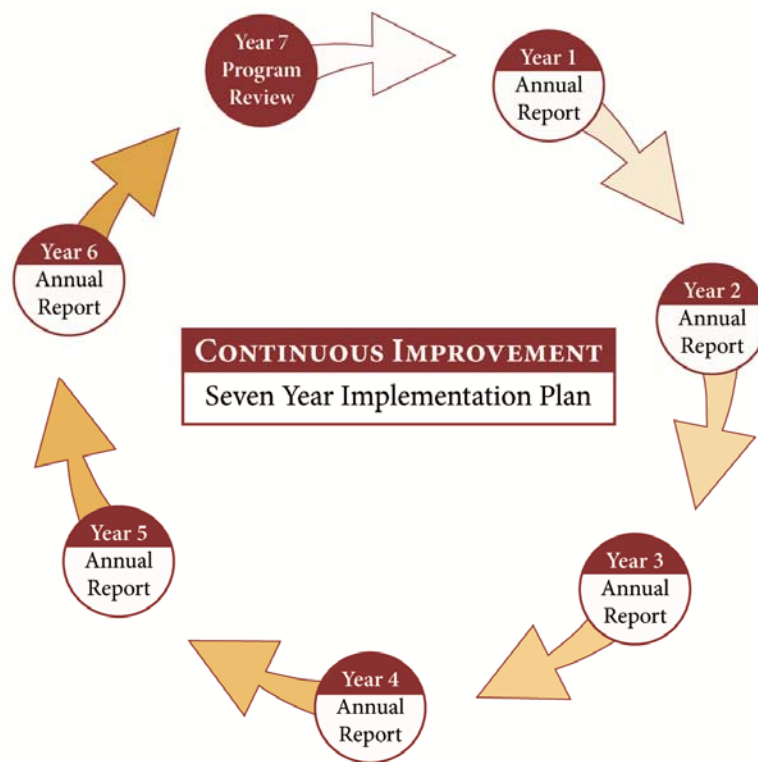


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework for Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement and assessment within the context of Academic Program Reviews:

- Exists in relationship with the University Mission and Strategic Plan.
- Evolves as a systematic ongoing planning and review process consistently used by the College/Schools and programs / departments.
- Contributes to a comprehensive, university-wide approach to assessment. Multiple methods of data collection and analysis of student learning are used to assess progress towards achievement of learning outcomes and to make informed decisions regarding change.
- Provides for regular and ongoing opportunities for engagement and reflection based on gathering of data and data analysis.
- Includes the development of an implementation plan that identifies priorities for the following six years. Progress is reported each year in an annual report.
- Conforms with the guidelines established in the [Principles of Assessment of Student Learning](#)

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

During the Academic Program Review (APR) process, areas for improvement are identified in the Implementation Plan (see Appendix 7). The implementation plan provides an ongoing map for assessing components of a program over time. Yearly progress on the identified areas for improvement, such as data from student learning outcomes assessment and program maintenance outcomes, is documented in the annual report (see Section IX).

INITIATIVE/TASK	APR CYCLE YEAR	ASSESSMENT METHODS/ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT PROCESS: COLLECTION/ANALYSIS/ DISCUSSION	RESOURCES NEEDED (IF APPLICABLE)
Program Learning Outcome (PLO)				
PLO 1:				
PLO 2:				
PLO 3:				
Program Maintenance Outcome (PMO)				
PMO 1:				
PMO 2:				
PMO 3:				

Figure 4. Implementation Plan Template

During the APR process, data are reviewed and used to inform program improvement decisions. Planning for continuous improvement is then organized through the implementation plan, which provides a structure beginning with the recommended actions identified from the APR (see [Design an Implementation Plan](#)) (CFRs 4.2, 4.3).

A *preliminary* implementation plan is developed by the program faculty. The implementation plan includes (but is not limited to) the following components:

- Key recommendations of the program faculty resulting from the self study; and
- Action steps to be taken in order to achieve each of the **Program Learning Outcomes**, such as a study on student achievement of critical thinking skills, and each of the **Program Maintenance Outcomes**, such as a study of the anticipated student profile over the next six years or schedule of equipment maintenance/equipment replacement.

The *preliminary* implementation plan is discussed at the Provost's APR Meeting (Appendix 8). Participants include the department chair, program coordinator and/or faculty (as determined by department chair or dean), dean, and the AVP (Academic Affairs).

In response to the meeting discussion and recommendations, the department chair completes the *final* implementation plan and submits to the college dean. The dean submits an electronic copy to the AVP

(Academic Affairs) within two weeks following the provost’s meeting. Following receipt of the final implementation plan, the provost issues a letter indicating final determination for program continuance.

IX. ANNUAL REPORTS

Components of the implementation plan are carried out on an annual basis and findings reported in the annual report (see Appendix 9). While the Academic Program Review (APR) is written every seven years, it is composed of an analysis of data and actions that occurred during the previous six years. A multiple-measures approach to gathering data contributes to reliability of findings, and allows each department to develop an assessment approach appropriate to its discipline. The accumulation of annual decisions and improvements collected through the annual reports contribute to a culture of continuous growth, culminating in the next APR.

Assessed Outcomes	Assessment Methods	Data Reviewed and Findings	Actions
<i>(List PLO# and/or PMO# for outcomes assessed during AY 201x-1x)</i>	<i>(Describe the assessment methods used this year and indicate the targeted PLO by #)</i>	<i>(Provide a description of the data reviewed and a summary of the findings. Describe the process for evaluating/analyzing the findings)</i>	<i>(Describe implemented or planned actions based on findings)</i>

Figure 5. Annual Report Template Excerpt

Program faculty submit an annual report on assessment of program learning outcomes (PLOs) and program maintenance outcomes (PMOs) each academic year (see [Developing Learning Outcomes](#)). The Office of Institutional Research prepares data annually for each program, including the number of students, faculty, degrees granted, and instructional cost. Based on the implementation plan, faculty evaluate the extent to which outcomes have been met. The six years of annual reports collectively become the basis for the APR (see [Report and Use Results](#)).

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

Revised and approved procedures and appendices by UEPC April 26, 2012