PERIODIC ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEWS AND PREPARATION OF A SELF-STUDY REPORT
FAM 856.6

Introduction:

The campus must ensure the continued enhancement of the quality of academic programs and the flexibility and vitality of the academic enterprise. The public, the legislature, accrediting bodies, the CSU Trustees, and the Statewide Academic Senate have all called for campuses to develop assessment and review procedures that provide evidence of the quality of degree programs. (The term *program* here refers to any school, department, or degree granting program, and references to *chair* are meant to include department chairs, school directors, and program coordinators or directors.) The Western Association of Schools and Colleges terms this emphasis on proof of academic achievement and excellence a "Culture of Evidence."

Outcomes Assessment involves defining program goals and objectives, specifying the criteria and methods to be used to determine whether students have reached the level of achievement expected, and analysis and use of the assessment findings for program improvement. Each department or program is responsible for designing its own outcomes assessment plan in accordance with its own specific disciplinary goals and practices. Outcomes assessments should normally include both qualitative criteria and quantitative measurements.

Program review is essential to this process. It is a tool to examine effective instructional strategies, to focus on the adjustment of curricula to changing student clientele and new knowledge, to identify other areas for improvement, and to assess the effectiveness of earlier actions taken to enhance the quality of a program.

The review process begins with the preparation of a program self-study report. Each program (majors, certificates, and credentials) must be reviewed every 7 years, unless special circumstances such as accreditation cycles warrant a change in the schedule. Changes to the review cycle are to be mutually agreed upon by the dean and chair prior to its acceptance. Any proposed change that is not mutually agreed upon after consultation between the dean and chair must be reviewed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, which will act in an advisory capacity to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, who will have the authority to decide if the program review schedule is to be changed.

After consultation with and approval by the College Dean and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, programs, which have specialized professional accreditation by state or national accrediting bodies, may use their accreditation report as the program review document.

Purpose:

Several purposes are intended for and accomplished by the program review process.

The program review is expected to:
1.   Assess changes and progress towards program goals since the last review.
2.   Assess and monitor program quality, and indicate how that quality is to be maintained.
3.   Analyze systematically the objectives and performance of the program.
4.   Compile informed feedback about the program from a wide range of sources: faculty, students, and other constituents involved with the program.
5.   Indicate how the needs/demands of the students and region are balanced by the desire to maintain quality.
6.   Identify strengths and weaknesses of the program.
7.   Compare programs with recognized national standards of excellence.
8.   Tie program evaluation results to university-wide planning and budgeting.
9.   Develop plans for change and improvement.

Functions of Program Review Participants:

Program

        Preparation of the self-study report will involve the program faculty in gathering and reviewing data about the findings of their annual outcomes assessment and other ongoing measurements of student achievement and learning. The report will examine the strengths and weaknesses of the program, make recommendations for changes in its curriculum, courses, instruction, and allocation of resources, and provide an outlook for the program's near future.
        Each program will assign, where possible, one of its own tenure-track faculty members, who has been at the University for at least two years, to act as its self-study representative, who will prepare the self-study report.

External reviewer

        The Academic Affairs Office will provide honorarium funds for the external reviewer(s). Graduate Programs should have a separate external reviewer. The University Academic Program Review Committee will name the external reviewer for each program, selected from a list of three names and their vita along with a ranking submitted by the program. The external reviewers will:

1.   Provide discipline-specific expertise and objectivity.
2.   Provide an outside/national perspective.
3.   Meet with dean, graduate dean, chair, faculty, students, members of the University Academic Program Review Committee, and VP of Academic Affairs to discuss the contents of the self-study report, obtain additional information, clarify issues, and

develop perspective.
4.   Verify the accuracy of the self-study.
5.   Provide assistance in addressing problems and reaching goals.
6.   Provide confirmation of the program's conclusions.
7.   Prepare a brief report with analysis of strengths and weaknesses found (the format of the report will be provided by the Associate Provost for Academic Programs).
8.   Make recommendations for change and improvement, which will supplement the program reports and findings.

The University Academic Program Review Committee

The University Academic Program Review Committee will consist of four senior faculty, one college dean, and one administrative representative. The four senior faculty representatives will be appointed from different colleges (exclusive of the programs currently being reviewed during that cycle) by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate. The college dean and administrative representative will be appointed by the VP of Academic Affairs. The committee will elect its own chair and proceed according to steps its members agree upon. Appointments to this committee will be for one review cycle. However, committee members may be reappointed. Its functions are:

1.   To approve external reviewers submitted by programs.
2.   To certify the integrity of the program review as carried out.
3.   At its discretion, to offer additional recommendations.

College Dean

1.   Assist with preparation of the program self-study report to ensure timeliness, accuracy, consistency, and completeness. It is particularly important that the dean impress upon the program that the self-study report is to be a frank self-assessment and not a public relations report.
2.   Provide logistical and operational support as required. This may include assigned time for coordination and preparation of self-study reports.
3.   Provide a report with comments to the recommendations of the current program reviews to Associate Provost for Academic Programs by July 1 of the review cycle.
4.   Assist the programs in developing a plan of action for responding to the findings and recommendations of the reports of program, external reviewer and the University Academic Program Review Committee.

Graduate Dean

1.   Review self-study documents for graduate programs to ensure completeness, accuracy, objectivity, and breadth of perspective beyond the campus and the CSU.
2.   Meet with and provide information to external reviewers regarding curriculum, admissions and candidacy procedures, academic standards, quality of theses and project, etc.

3. Assist programs in follow up and carrying out the plan of action for addressing the University Academic Program Review Committee's summary recommendations and needed changes.
4. Convey findings of graduate program reviews to the graduate coordinators for discussion of general issues of quality of graduate programs.

Campuswide Program Review Coordinator (Associate Provost for Academic Programs)

1. Notify college and programs of the review schedule and policy.
2. Establish a budget for the review.
3. Oversee appointment of administrative committee members.
4. Oversee general conduct of the program review process.
5. Submit final review outcomes to the President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost, and the Faculty Senate.
6. Prepare summary of findings for report to Chancellor's Office and Board of Trustees.

Post-Review Procedures

After the University Academic Program Review Committee has presented its report, the college dean, chair, the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs will meet to identify problem areas, coordinate recommendations and plan appropriate steps to convert recommendations into curricular and other proposals. Each item to be addressed will indicate the following:
1. The expected action/change to be taken, e.g. revision of curriculum, addition of faculty, purchase of equipment, etc.
2. A specific time line for when the task will be completed.
3. Individuals responsible for carrying out the needed change.
4. Any anticipated cost for implementation of the recommendation.
5. Possible sources of resources, such as:
    --reallocation within program
    --reallocation from College
    --funding from Academic Affairs division
    --grants and other external sources of funding
    --University resources to be requested through budget process

EPRC will review this policy again during the 2015-16 academic year, or sooner upon request.

Organization of the Self-Study

Your self-study should aim to evaluate your program in its entirety and should focus only on questions that you find important to ask -- and that you yourself generate. This document will list several questions for purposes of illustration (all of them originally from a WASC accreditation agency workshop), but you should regard these as examples meant to stimulate thinking about the kinds of questions that you can ask. Feel free to modify these questions or to come up with ones of your own to suit your particular program's interests and needs. Working together with the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, you will refine these questions and determine the kind of data that you will need to answer them. The Office of Institutional Research will then supply you with that data where appropriate. It is not necessary to generate a lot of questions or to write a long report. Prioritize. Focus on those questions to which you yourself want to know the answer. The only accreditation requirement is that you address student learning outcomes at some point, but you should aim beyond that to evaluate your program as a whole. A report of *thirty pages* will be adequate in most cases.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. What student learning outcomes do you expect and what evidence do you have that your students meet them?

Faculty Engagement

1. How current and active are faculty in the discipline?
2. To what extent do faculty continue to develop their teaching?
3. To what extent do faculty participate in campus and community service?

Program Resources

1. Does the program have enough resources to adequately serve students?
2. Are students able to move through the program in a timely manner?
3. Do faculty have enough resources to maintain their currency in the discipline and improve their knowledge in it?

Program Capacities

1. What do you do well, what have you improved, and what are you working to improve?
2. Why is the program growing, shrinking, or maintaining its current size?

This should be sufficient to get you started. Spend some time and care in formulating the questions that you want to answer, keeping in mind that there is no prescribed number of questions that you must ask. Your program's responses to recommendations from your *last* program review will be provided by the Associate

Provost for Academic Programs. Format your self-study as follows.

Format

I.   Description of the program within the context of the university's mission (2 pages).

II. Responses to recommendations from last program review (2 pages, provided by Associate Provost for Academic Programs).

III. Student Learning Outcomes

IV. Faculty Engagement (optional)

V. Program Resources (optional)

VI. Program Capacities (optional)

Alternative Format

If you already produce a report for an accreditation agency, you may attach a one- or two-page concordance to that report that locates the following information for WASC:

I.   Recommendations from last program review

II. Action Plan developed from last program review (provided by Associate Provost for Academic Programs)

III. Responses to recommendations from last program review (2 pages, provided by Associate Provost for Academic Programs)

IV. Analysis of Student Learning Outcomes

V. External Reviewer's Report

Calendar of Deadlines for Academic Program Review

	Due Date	Group or Individual Responsible	Action
Year Prior to Self-Study	Feb. 15	Associate Provost for Academic Programs	Notifies Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the President to appoint members of the University Academic Program Review Committee.
	March 1	Associate Provost for Academic Programs	Notifies College affected of forthcoming program review process.
	March 15	*College Dean*	Forms Program Self-Study Committee, composed of individuals responsible for preparing the self-study report.
	April 1	Associate Provost for Academic Programs	Convenes initial meeting of Program Self-Study Committee, College Dean and Chair to define and clarify self-study questions and issues, establish timetable; discuss student and alumni survey forms (if they are intended to be used), establish guidelines for use of external reviewer.
	April 15	Chair	Supply 3 names, brief vita of possible external reviewers along with ranking of the reviewers to University Academic Program Review Committee.
	May 1	College Dean and University Institutional Research Office	Administers students and alumni surveys (if they are intended to be used) and forwards returned surveys to University Institutional Research.
	May 15	University Academic Program Review Committee	Recommends ranked external reviewer for each program undergoing the review process.
	June 1	Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Chair	Facilitates appointment of external reviewer(s), Program confirms acceptance of external reviewer assigned.
Year of Self-Study	Sept. 15	Chair	Requests (if desired) pertinent holdings/services/data from the library.
	Oct. 1	Associate Provost for Academic Programs & University Institutional Research Office	Forwards results of student survey (if used) and other data to coordinator of self-study report. Convenes University Academic Program Review Committee, distributes data, provides additional information as needed.
	Nov. 1	Library	Provides holdings/services data to Chair (if requested).

Year of Self-Study	Dec. 1	Chair	First draft of the program self-study report submitted to Associate Provost for Academic Programs and College Dean.
	Dec. 15	Associate Provost for Academic Programs and College Dean	Reviews and returns draft program self-study report with comments to the Chair to prepare final self-study report.
	January 5	Chair	Submits the final self-study report to the College Dean and Associate Provost for Academic Programs for distribution to the external reviewer and the University Academic Program Review Committee.
	Jan. 15 to March 5	External Reviewer	Completes campus visit and interview, submits report of findings and recommendations to Associate Provost for Academic Programs.
	March 5	Associate Provost for Academic Programs	Distributes copies of the report from external reviewer to Chair, College Dean and the University Academic Program Review Committee.
	April 15	The University Academic Program Review Committee.	Meets with College Dean and program faculty for additional information needed for preparation of their report.
	June 1	The University Academic Program Review Committee	Presents a report of its findings and recommendations along with summary statement to Associate Provost for Academic Programs, who will distribute copies to College Dean, Chair, University President, and Faculty Senate.
Year After Self-Study	July 1	College Dean	Presents a report with comments to the recommendations of the program review to Associate Provost for Academic Programs, Chair and the University Academic Program Review Committee.
	Oct. 1	Chair	Provides Plan of Action to College Dean and Associate Provost for Academic Programs.
	Oct. 15	Associate Provost for Academic Programs	Meets with College Dean, Chair, and VP of Academic Affairs to identify problem areas and to review and coordinate implementation of recommendation and action plan.
	Nov. 15	Associate Provost for Academic Programs	Forwards summary statement to CSU Chancellor's Office.