
Program Review Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Program review in the California State University originates from Board of Trustee policy as found in the Chancellor's Memorandum AP 71-32, "Performance Review of Existing Degree Major Programs." Therein Campuses are asked to "establish a formal performance review procedure for all existing degree programs on campus in order to assess periodically both the quantitative and qualitative viability of each undergraduate and graduate program in the total context of offerings." An annual resolution by the Board of Trustees states "that a formal review of existing degree curricula continue to be conducted annually by the campuses as a part of the overall academic planning process."

At California State University Northridge, the major purpose of program review is to ensure the highest quality educational programs. In order to accomplish this purpose, the program review process should foster departmental self reflection and creative problem solving about curriculum, faculty, students and resources. This process should promote positive and forward-looking change in academic programs, typically on a five year cycle. The program review process should utilize internal and external resources effectively and should be integrated into academic planning and assessment.

The Program Review Process

1. Calendar

The Vice-Provost, in consultation with the Associate Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies, Deans, Associate Deans and the Department Chairs/Program Coordinators (hereafter "Chairs") will establish a program review calendar. The calendar will ensure that reviews, beginning with the creation of a self-study document, will occur at least every five years and that they can be completed in a timely manner. The calendar will be reviewed every November/December as part of the annual request from the Chancellor's Office for an update of the Academic Plan (under the heading "Review of Existing Programs.")

2. Data from Institutional Research

At the initiation of the self study process, the program procures data from Institutional Research, which will be incorporated into the self-study. Data can be found on the IR website. If you have further questions, please contact IR.

3. **Self Study**

Each program will prepare a self-study according to guidelines approved by the Educational Policies Committee (EPC) and the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). (see Self Study Guidelines).

4. **Faculty Participation**

The Department Chair or Academic Program Coordinator (hereafter referred to as Chair) shall provide for the participation of faculty in the program for the preparation of the self-study. Each faculty member will receive a copy of the self-study guidelines. A draft of the self-study will be distributed to all faculty for review prior to formal approval. The faculty will approve the program's self-study before it is forwarded to the college.

(Note: In recognition of the fact that the proper preparation of the self-study requires extensive use of faculty and/or Chair time it is strongly recommended that the College and University provide reassigned time to the program for this purpose.)

Where there are no tenure-track faculty in a program, the governing or advisory body will review the self study and program review documents.

5. **Participation of EPC and GSC Representatives**

EPC and GSC (if the program being reviewed includes a graduate program) will each appoint a present or former member as a representative to participate in the program review process. Normally these representatives will be selected from programs outside of the college of the program being reviewed. These representatives will be provided with a copy of the program's self-study and will participate in the college level review meeting. They will also be invited to the exit meeting with the external reviewers and possibly other meetings with the external reviewers, preferably when the reviewers are meeting with the program curriculum and/or graduate committees. EPC and GSC representatives will receive copies of the reviewers' final report and will be invited to attend the final MOU meeting convened by the Vice-Provost to discuss this final report. The review process is completed with the circulation of the Final Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). At this time the EPC and GSC representatives will share the relevant curriculum recommendations with their respective committees.

6. **College Level Review**

Each college will review the self-study within its curriculum review and/or planning structure, for example, its Academic Council, Academic Planning Committee, etc. Educational Policies Committee and Graduate Studies Committee representatives will participate in the college review process and will be present during all discussion of the review. In some colleges, program review may be a function of the college rather than the program, e.g., the College of Business and Economics.

It is the function of the college review committee to evaluate the departmental self-study in accordance with the established guidelines and to determine whether the department has adequately and realistically conducted its self-study. The college committee may require clarification from the program on any aspect of the self-study or may require additional information. The college review committee and Dean should ensure that the program self-study is comprehensive and accurate before submission to Undergraduate Studies. If in their opinion the self-study is deficient, the Dean will require the self-study to be revised or rewritten. The representatives of EPC and GSC will report to their respective committees on the progress of the self-study at this point.

7. **External Review Team**

The Vice-Provost, in consultation with the Associate Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies (if applicable), Dean, Associate Dean, and Chair, will invite a team of external reviewers. It is recommended that the external reviewers as a team represent a variety of academic experiences, e.g., in graduate studies, or in general education, and/or in specialties within the discipline.

The program will provide a list of suitable candidates from off-campus to the Dean. This list will also include a business address, telephone number, email, description of current position and specialty within the discipline and a brief rationale for the recommendation. At least one reviewer should represent a CSU. Geographic locality is preferred in order to minimize expenses. The review team usually consists of two reviewers. For some programs, the 2nd reviewer may be invited from the CSUN campus as long as that person is qualified to review the program and has not taught a course in the program under review. The Chair develops a ranked list of external reviewers, the Associate Dean reviews the list, which is forwarded with the self-study to the Program Review Coordinator. The Program Review Coordinator will invite the reviewers to campus based upon ranking, expenses and their availability.

In conducting the review process, the external review team will respond to the self-study, consult with the program, college, and others in the university, evaluate the program, and submit recommendations. (See [Guidelines for External Reviewers' Campus Visit.](#))

8. **Coordination of External Review Team's Visit**

The Office of Assessment and Program Review, in consultation with the Vice-Provost, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies (if applicable), the Dean, the Associate Dean and the Chair, will coordinate the on-campus visit of the review team. The Office of Assessment and Program Review, in consultation with the Vice-Provost, will schedule the University-level administrator visits and the exit meeting. The Chair will schedule the department/program visits.

9. **Initial Response to Review Team's Report**

The report received by the Office of Assessment and Program Review from the external review team will be forwarded to the Vice-Provost and the department Chair. The Program Review Coordinator (in the Office of Assessment and Program Review) in consultation with the Vice-Provost writes a draft MOU based on the external reviewers' report and forwards it to the Chair. The Chair circulates the report and the draft MOU to the faculty and arranges time for discussion and evaluation by the faculty. If deemed necessary by the faculty, a written response and preliminary plan of action reflecting any diversity of opinion that may exist within the program will then be formally approved by the faculty and forwarded to Assessment and Program Review and/or brought to the final MOU meeting. Copies of the external review team's report, the draft MOU, and any written program response will be distributed by the Program Review Coordinator to the Vice-Provost, the Dean, and all other individuals who will be invited to participate in the Final MOU Meeting.

10. **Final MOU Meeting ("Wrap-Up Meeting")**

The draft MOU and any response from the program will be thoroughly discussed at a meeting convened by the Vice-Provost in order to achieve consensus on a final plan of action. (Reminder: Any response that the program has should be brought to that meeting.) The following people are invited: the Associate Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies (if the program under review has a graduate program); the Chair; the Dean; the Associate Dean; all members of the program faculty; and the EPC and GSC representatives.

A document summarizing the meeting (the draft Memorandum of Understanding) will be reviewed at the meeting where consensus on the final MOU is reached. The final MOU typically contains commendations, recommendations, and understandings concerning the recommendations. The final MOU will be sent to all parties attending the meeting by the Office of Assessment and Program Review. All parties will be given 3 weeks to respond to any final editing needed in the MOU. At this time, a copy of the final MOU is sent to the President and held by the Office of Assessment and Program Review.

11. **Report to Chancellor's Office**

A synopsis of completed program reviews is submitted to the Chancellor's office annually, typically in January.

12. **Follow-up**

Progress on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and related program activity will be an agenda item for at least one faculty meeting each academic year between reviews.

During the academic year following completion of the program review, the Dean will meet with the Chair to review recommendations contained in the final program review document (the MOU) to ascertain the status of any action recommended. Thereafter, the Dean will meet annually with the Chair with the purpose of reviewing implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Three years after the completion of the program review, the Dean will submit a report to the Vice-Provost describing the progress the program is making toward fulfilling the recommendations contained in the program review report.

13. Brief Calendar

The program review process requires one to two academic years for completion. This calendar is abbreviated.

<u>Prior to First Academic Year</u>	
March	<p>Program Review notifies programs of forthcoming AY review cycle.</p> <p>Chair/Coordinator plans for release time.</p>
<u>First Academic Year</u>	
August	<p>Chair/Coordinator assembles faculty and assigns review tasks for fall semester.</p>
August (or during first week of classes)	<p>Program Review launch meeting – Chair/Coordinator, assessment liaison, university assessment director, university program review coordinator, IR and other relevant parties.</p> <p>Program begins self-study in consultation with program faculty, Chair/Coordinator and input from Associate Dean.</p>
November	<p>Schedule faculty meeting to present preliminary self-study document and assess progress of program review.</p>

December - February	<p>Finalize self-study using faculty input. Document reviewed by College Academic Council, EPC and GSC reps. Dean reviews/approves self-study. Copies of self-study submitted to Program Review Coordinator. The self-study can be submitted electronically along with one hard copy for the permanent file.</p> <p>Compile list of potential external reviewers and forward to Dean's office and Program Review Coordinator.</p>
February through June	<p>External Reviewers visit occurs and subsequent report submitted to Office of Assessment and Program Review.</p> <p>Final MOU Meeting Occurs. Final MOU is received by department/program. Final MOU is distributed to Provost and President. President's Office accepts final MOU.</p>
	<p>Upon completion of the process, programs will have five years to implement recommendations contained in the MOU before beginning the self-study process once again.</p>
<u>Second Academic Year</u>	<p>If the self-study was submitted too late to plan the external reviewers' visit and/or the final MOU meeting, it can be scheduled during this semester.</p>
December- January	<p>Summary report to Chancellor's Office</p>