



PA State System of Higher Education Administrative Procedure

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ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS' POLICY 1986-04-A: PROGRAM REVIEW

Approved: October 9, 2003

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Background: Periodic program review is a best practice in American higher education that involves stakeholders in the continuous improvement of existing academic and academic-and student-support programs. Such review includes an analysis of past performance that is used to inform present and future directions and decision-making. The review process must be integrated with strategic-planning and budgeting processes, with regional and specialized accreditation processes, and with student-learning outcomes assessment.

A. Guidelines for Program Review

1. Cycle. All University programs not subject to specialized accreditation shall be evaluated at least once every five years; when deemed necessary, the University president may require a shorter review interval for any programs. Reviews of programs that are subject to specialized accreditation shall be due within 30 days of receipt of the final letter and report from the accreditor. At least once every 10 years, each program not subject to specialized accreditation shall be reviewed by an appropriate external evaluator.
2. Types of Reviews. The full review is for programs not subject to specialized accreditation and requires external consultation. The President or designee may designate a program subject to specialized accreditation for a full program review.

The modified review is for programs subject to specialized accreditation. The modified review must include the accreditor's recommendations/suggestions and rejoinder, when appropriate.

3. Criteria for Full Review of Academic Programs. A self-study shall be conducted for all academic programs scheduled for review. Reviews of academic programs shall include analyses of data pertaining to the following criteria:
- a. *Goals set during last review and progress in meeting those goals
 - b. *Mission centrality
 - c. *Environmental scan (covering topics such as changing student characteristics, impact of technology on services, evolving student expectations, and federal and state statutes as well as policies and legal decisions affecting programs, continuing need for the program and currency of curriculum)
 - *Demand
 - *Enrollment trends
 - Student credit-hour generation
 - Course enrollments
 - *Program Organization
 - Structure—Include collaborations if appropriate.
 - *Faculty credentials and diversity
 - *Student diversity
 - *Resources—Include items such as the following:
 - Staffing levels, facilities, and budget, or actual costs
 - *Library and other learning resources
 - *Academic policies, standards, and grading practices
 - f. Program and Student Learning Outcomes
 - *Faculty achievements (e.g., grants, presentations, publications awards)
 - *Student achievements (e.g., awards, presentations, publications, research)
 - *Program outcomes—Include, as appropriate, items such as the following:
 - Test scores,
 - Retention data,
 - 4- and 6-year graduation rates,
 - Graduate- and professional school-acceptance,
 - Employment rates,
 - Employer assessments, and
 - Economic or community development.
 - *Student Learning Outcomes—describe the knowledge and skill outcomes and how they are assessed.

- g. Unique/special program features
- h. *Post-review implementation plan—Faculty/staff in each program must develop an implementation plan for continuous enhancement by building upon strengths and addressing challenges. The implementation plan, which must also include goals and action items to be accomplished by the next review period, will become final only after it has been approved by the president or designee.

Other categories of information may be added at the University's discretion. The Office of the Chancellor, in consultation with State System universities, shall establish and review criteria for the academic program reviews.

- 4. Criteria for Full Review of Academic- and Student-Support Programs. A self-study shall be conducted for all academic- and student-support programs or services scheduled for review. At minimum, the following academic- and student-support programs shall be reviewed: library, student life, enrollment services (e.g., admissions, bursar, registrar), public safety, judicial affairs, financial aid, counseling, athletics, residence life, career services, academic support services, and disability services. Reviews of academic- and student-support programs shall include analyses of data pertaining to the following criteria.
 - a. *Goals set during last review and progress in meeting those goals
 - b. *Mission centrality
 - c. *Environmental scan (covering topics such as changing student characteristics, impact of technology on services, evolving student expectations, and federal and state statutes as well as policies and legal decisions affecting services)
 - d. *Demand
 - *Number of students served
 - *Characteristics of clientele served, when appropriate
 - Relationship to mandates and/or system requirements, when appropriate
 - e. *Program Organization
 - Structure—Emphasis on how structure facilitates attainment of goals and objectives
 - *Cooperation/interaction/collaboration with other University departments, with other State System Universities, and with appropriate external groups

- *Faculty/staff credentials and diversity
- *Student-employee diversity
- *Resources—Analysis of the following:
 - Use of technology, when appropriate
 - Appropriateness of staffing to university and program goals
- Fiscal, human physical and other resources as appropriate
- Facilities and equipment

- f. *Currency of departmental policies (development/revisions, reasons, impact, etc.)

- g. Accreditation/approval, when appropriate

- h. Program and Student Learning Outcomes
 - Faculty/staff achievements
 - *Creative/innovative strategies
 - *Student engagement/leadership/involvement in program development, policy development, employment searches, etc.
 - *Student-learning outcomes
 - *Student satisfaction (e.g., Noel-Levitz, ACT, CIRP, etc.)
 - *Effectiveness in serving minorities and other underrepresented groups
 - *Effectiveness in serving special-needs students, when appropriate

- i. Unique/special program features

- j. *Post-review implementation plan – Faculty/staff in each program must develop an implementation plan for continuous enhancement by building upon strengths and addressing challenges. The implementation plan, which must also include goals and action items to be accomplished by the next review period, will become final only after it has been approved by the president or designee.

Other categories of information may be added at the University's discretion. The Office of the Chancellor, in consultation with State System universities, shall establish and review criteria for the academic- and student-support programs reviews.

*Required items

B. Evaluation

1. Internal Evaluators: Committees appointed or designated to review self-study documents and make recommendations about the program in question should include at least two people not directly responsible for the program;

these may include faculty or administrators from other units, students, and/or alumni.

2. External Evaluators: External review of existing academic, and academic and student-support programs is a standard practice in higher education. The purpose of external review is to garner additional perspectives on program strengths and weaknesses from individuals in the field or a closely related field who are affiliated with other institutions. Except under special circumstances, external evaluations are to be from outside the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

C. Reporting

1. The president or designee shall keep the council of trustees apprised of program reviews and their outcomes.
2. By August 15, each University president or designee shall submit to the State System Office of Academic and Student Affairs a Program Review Summary Form for each program review completed during the year. For an accreditation review, however, a report shall be submitted by 30 days after the receipt of an external accreditation report. Such summaries should include the major findings and recommendations emanating from the review and note the planned timetable for implementing the recommendations. In specific instances, follow-up reports or information may be requested.
3. The Office of Academic and Student Affairs will develop an appropriate procedure and timeline for periodic reporting to the Board of Governors.